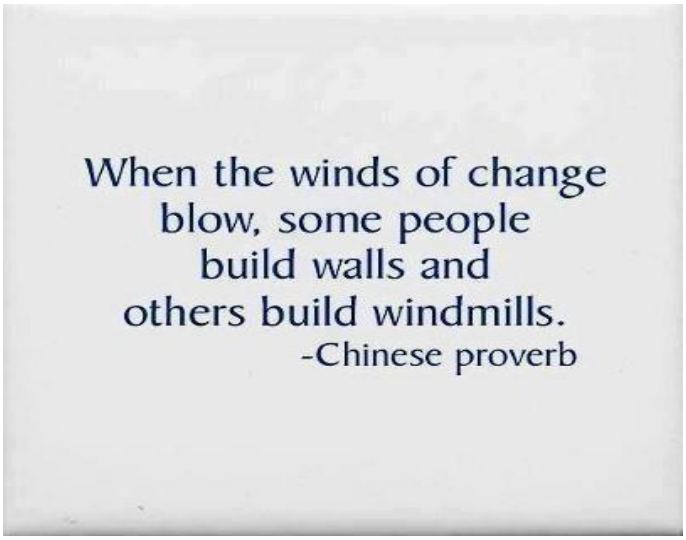
ISLE of WIGHT
COUNTY IN VIRGINIA



Economic Development Strategic Plan

Adopted March 21, 2013



Special Thanks To:

Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors
Isle of Wight County Planning Commission
Isle of Wight County Staff
Town of Smithfield
Town of Windsor

And the Isle of Wight County Community Residents and Businesses
whose help made this Plan possible.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Economic Development Strategic Plan Purpose and Objectives

Since the adoption of the County's last Economic Development Strategic Plan in 2000, the County and the nation have undergone a time of unparalleled growth and recession. This period of boom and bust has made a lasting impact on the modern economy at every level, from the international marketplace to the local, small businessman and woman, and whose final reverberations on modern business practices may not be seen for some time.

Since 2000, the national and local economy witnessed soaring real estate prices followed by prolonged periods of high unemployment and foreclosure rates in the wake of the financial market collapse in 2008. Banks began to tighten access to traditional financing tools, making it increasingly difficult to start new business ventures or purchase new homes. Rising fuel prices increased living and business expenses, further complicating the economic recovery.

Despite the setbacks suffered during this time period, advances in communication and information sharing increased the speed and reduced the cost of doing business. During the same period, the nation continued to support military operations in the Middle East. The large military presence in the Hampton Roads region helped to buoy the local economy by sustaining employment and businesses that provide support services to the military. The last twelve years have seen the emergence of energy, healthcare, and food production as major growth industries. Although manufacturing employment continues to decline, the manufacturing industry continues to increase in productivity and average wages due to technological improvements. Recent data show a trend of manufacturing facilities beginning to relocate in the US due to favorable conditions in materials, labor and transportation.

In light of these economic changes, communities need to plan in order to effectively compete for limited new investment opportunities as well as improve the communication between government and existing businesses to encourage growth of local resources. Undergoing an Economic Development Strategic Planning process will identify the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in light of economic realities that did not exist at the time of the County's last plan. Like other long range community plans, an Economic Development Plan should be a "living" document that should be revisited on a regular basis to be revised with new and improved information and to most accurately reflect the vision and goals of its residents and businesses.

1.2 Background

Isle of Wight County adopted a "Strategic Plan for Economic Development" in 2000, which serves as a basic framework for the business development program within the Economic Development Department. Many of the recommendations contained in the Plan are still relevant to the County's current economic development efforts, including the acquisition and development of property for economic development, the construction of vital infrastructure, securing the natural resource base through the purchase of development rights, securing open space easements and encouraging conservation development practices, improving the County's ability to produce a world class workforce and reaching out to existing businesses. An assessment of the status of the 2000 Plan's goals and objectives is included as an appendix to the revised Plan.

1.3 Why Update the Plan?

A revised Economic Development Strategic Plan could evaluate industries with growth potential for the County, identify emerging and future trends, develop education and workforce development goals, and develop a list of measurable goals and action steps to implement the new Plan.

2. Isle of Wight County Socioeconomic Profile and Economic Landscape

2.1 Isle of Wight County Regional Context

Isle of Wight County measures 316 square miles and is located in the southeastern portion of Virginia known as the Hampton Roads region. The County's location on the western edge of this metropolitan area brings with it many economic advantages including easy access to one of the largest eastern seaboard ports at the Port of Virginia, the I-95 corridor, and two regional airports. In addition, the County is traversed by several interstates and two major rail lines belonging to Norfolk Southern and CSX. The County also offers a full array of public utility services in its development districts, including a new broadband service scheduled for completion by December 2012.

Established in 1634 as one of the original shires of Virginia, Isle of Wight, originally known as Warrosquoyacke until a name change in 1637, established itself as a successful port of trade and farming center, establishing an agricultural heritage that is evident in the County today. As a result of this predominant rural land pattern, the County maintains a low population density of 112 people per square mile, compared to some of its more urban neighbors to the east and north. Suffolk and Chesapeake, for example, have a population density of 211 and 652 people per square mile of land area, respectively.

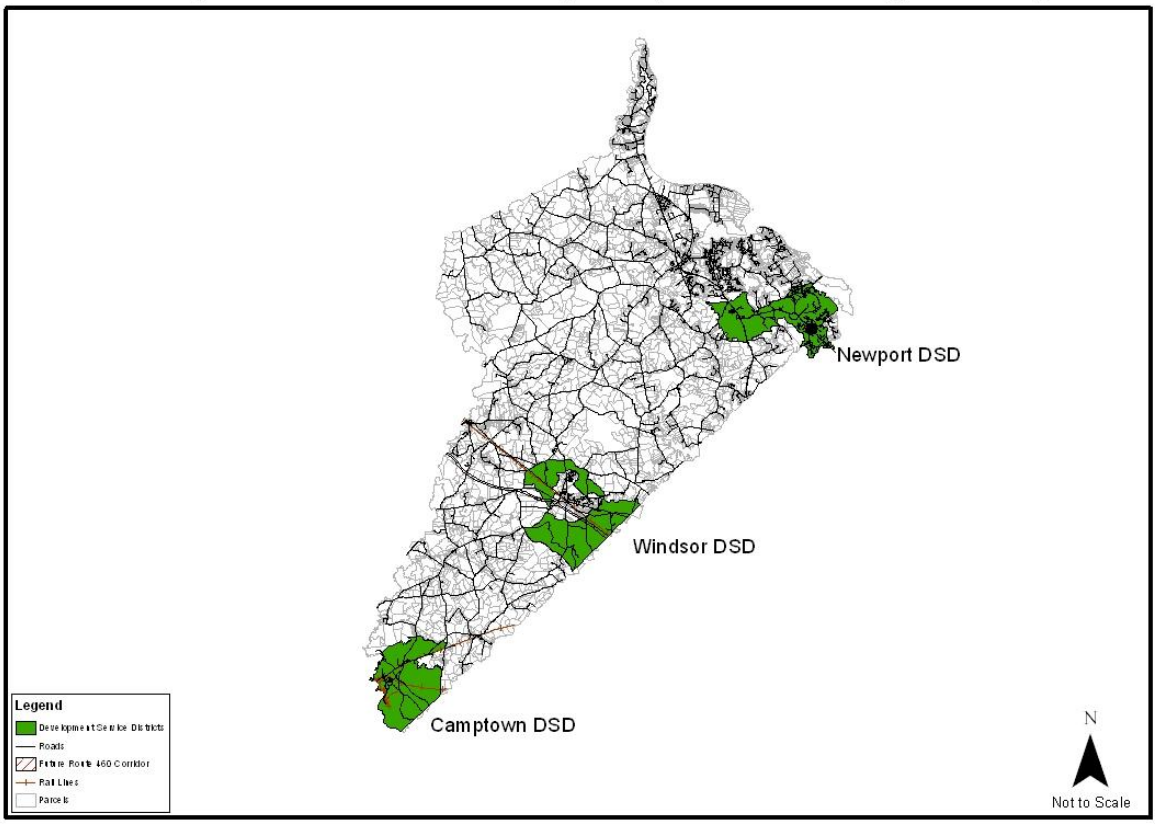
Isle of Wight County has a long history of growth management endeavors in an effort to protect its unique rural character as well as achieve a more efficient pattern for future development. The County's growth management strategy as outlined in its Comprehensive Plan guides new development to locations where adequate public infrastructure such as roads, water, sewer, schools, and related facilities, is available or can be provided most efficiently and cost effectively.

As part of its growth management strategy, the County designated three strategic growth areas called Development Service Districts, or DSDs. The three DSDs are located around and close to the existing population centers of Carrollton, Windsor, and Camptown. The benefits of these strategic growth areas include:

- Existing and planned public water and sewer facilities;
- Ready access to the region's transportation network, including Route 17, Route 258, Route 460, and Route 58 as well as two rail lines which provide direct connections to the Virginia Ports;
- Proximity to the nearby population centers of Smithfield, Windsor, Franklin, Newport News, Hampton as well as the rest of the Hampton Roads region; and
- Planned, future growth opportunities including a mix of residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

Figure 2.1 shows the location of the DSDs for the County.

Development Service Districts (DSDs) for Isle of Wight County



2.2 Isle of Wight Socioeconomic Trends

Even with its historic low density land use pattern, the County of Isle of Wight has maintained a healthy population growth rate over the last twenty years. Since the 2000 US Census, the County has grown an average of approximately 2% per year, higher than the State's average growth rate of 1.45% over the same time period as well as over the national average growth rate of 1.2%.

The 2010 US Census estimated the County's population at 35,270 persons. As of June 2012, the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) estimates that that County's population will grow another 8,813 persons by 2020 for a total of 44,083 people. This increase represents 25% more people over the County's 2010 population. The VEC also projects the County's population to reach 51,629 people by 2030, representing a 46% increase over its 2010 population. These projections reflect a 2.3 to 2.5% growth rate per year.

In the wake of the recent economic downturn of the last four years, Isle of Wight County is working to redefine itself following the loss of thousands of jobs as several of its largest employers reduced operations or closed facilities altogether. As on the national

level, local unemployment remains high and traditional methods of financing make buying homes, expanding businesses or starting new ones more difficult than ever. Isle of Wight must compete with other communities for an even smaller pool of new investment dollars from new or expanding businesses to replace lost tax revenues and jobs.

In an effort to help assess the competitive level of Isle of Wight County, this Plan examines several socioeconomic indices. These measurements, such as educational attainment and crime rates, can provide a quick assessment of how "attractive" a community might be to new workers or companies as a location for their business. A higher than average educational attainment score might signal that a company might find it easier to hire skilled employees in the area. The availability of high-speed internet in a community might make doing business in the County easier. The availability of the internet also provides increased educational opportunities for its residents. A more educated population together with a lower than average poverty rate, teenage pregnancy rate, a high level of diversity and other socioeconomic indicators are also associated with higher levels of entrepreneurship and new company startups.

In order to determine whether Isle of Wight County is "above average" or "below average" in attracting and keeping business, the County's statistics were compared to the state and national levels. Justification for assessing such indicators can be found in the work by Professor Richard Florida of the University of Toronto School of Management, and the Next Cities program developed by Next Generation Consulting in order to attract and keep talented workers. Closer to home, Dr. Gregory Fairchild of the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business prescribes improving these statistics in order to encourage local entrepreneurship. Measuring these indices allows a community to pinpoint its strengths and identify areas where additional work may be needed in order to improve its attractiveness as a business location.

Table 2.1 shows the results of the statistical comparison. The indices included in the Table represent only a small portion of statistics that could be used to assess a community's "attractiveness" to businesses and workers. Others could include the percentage of open space/trails/parks available to residents, cultural opportunities, dining or shopping availability, and commuting times. The measures included in this study represent important statistics on earnings, educational levels, and public health and safety as compared to the average rates of Virginia and the United States.

The data in the table shows that Isle of Wight County performed at the same level or above on a majority of the indices. Isle of Wight County offers many benefits to a potential new business or an existing business weighing whether to relocate outside the County. Isle of Wight County has a greater level of educational attainment, educational spending per pupil, and a lower teen pregnancy rate than either the state or the nation. The County has a higher household income, lower crime rate and a lower poverty rate than the state and nation. The County can also boast of a higher level of minority-owned businesses (includes African American and women-owned businesses). Areas

on which the County could improve include voter participation, employment opportunities in growth sectors of the economy, and raising the per capita income. The County performed on average with the state and nation on library visits per capita and its unemployment rate.

The analysis of these measures not only provides a substantial marketing tool to verify the benefits of the County as a business location, but also to justify the County's investment in its educational, public safety and economic development programs. The Plan recommends that the County continue to periodically monitor these measures as well as expand the list to make sure the County stays at the top of its location game for new businesses and to assess the quality of life for its existing businesses and residents as well.

Table 2.1 Socioeconomic Statistic Comparison*

Socioeconomic Indices	National	State	Isle of Wight County
Educational Attainment	85.3%	86.2%	87.2%
Public School Spending per Pupil	$10, 499	$10,930	$11,491
Library Use *(Average Visits per Capita, www.ala.org and the Blackwater Regional Library 2010 Annual Report)*	5.4	5.5	5.3
Household Income	$51,222	$61,090	$62,298
Per Capita Income	$26,942	$31,893	$29,594
Homeownership Rate	66.6%	68.9%	81.1%
Median Home Value	$188,400	$255,100	$256,600
Average Commute Time (*minutes*)	25.3	27.2	29.4
Growth Sector Employment (National) *(www.bls.gov, 2010, and 2008-2010 American Community Survey)*			
Educational, Health, and Social Services	22.6%	20.7%	18.9%
Professional Services	10.5%	14.3%	9.4%
Retail	11.6%	10.9%	10.3%
Public Administration	4.9%	9.0%	8.8%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreational, & Food and Accommodation Services	9.1%	8.3%	7.7%
Unemployment Rate *(www.vec.virginia.gov as of September 2012)*	7.6%	5.6%	5.9%
Poverty Rate	14.4%	10.7%	8.9%
Teen Pregnancy Rate (www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/svsr/nvsr60/nvsr60_o2.pdf and www.vdh.virginia.gov/healthstats, 2010)	3.4%	2.1%	1.6%
Crime Rate (Percent Population Affected) *(Includes both Violent and Property Crimes, www.fbi.gov, 2010)*	3.35%	2.54%	1.89%
Minority Owned Businesses *(African American-owned/Women-owned)*	7.1%/28.8%	9.9%/30.1%	15.3%/26.1%
Registered Voter Turnout Rate *(www.census.gov/hhes/www/socdemo/voting/publications/p20/2010/tables.html, www.sbe.virginia.gov, Isle of Wight County Voter Registrar's Office)*	45.5%	38.4%	43%

**Data sources that are not the US Census are referenced below the name of the indice.*

2.3 Isle of Wight's Economic Landscape

Even though Isle of Wight performs at the same level, if not higher, as the rest of the State and the nation on many of the socioeconomic indicators examined, the national recession that began in 2008 and the closing of several large employers redefined the economic landscape in Isle of Wight County. An estimate of the impact of the closing of International Paper's Franklin paper mill as well as several other paper-related businesses in the County was conducted by the County's Commissioner of the Revenue. The estimate projected a $6.7 million reduction in local tax revenue, including real estate, machinery and tools, and personal property taxes. The closings and job reductions of these other paper-industry related businesses resulted in the loss of an additional 213 jobs. The cumulative impact of this job loss will cause multiple indirect impacts to the surrounding region as the affected companies and their employees reduce or stop their spending with other local businesses. As evidenced by the loss of the paper-related businesses in the County, this loss of demand will force other companies to reduce their employment levels. Due to loss of revenue, the County's government, one of the top ten largest employers, implemented a hiring freeze, eliminated services and postponed capital projects, including water and sewer and transportation improvements needed to accommodate future growth needs.

Even with the large layoffs following the recession, the manufacturing sector remains the County's largest employer. According to the Virginia Employment Commission, the top five industries by employment in the County in the first quarter of 2012 include:

1. Manufacturing - 2,987 employees
2. Government (local, state and federal) – 1,589 employees
3. Retail Trade – 958 employees
4. Accommodation and Food Services – 719 employees
5. Health Care and Social Assistance – 690 employees

As of the first quarter of 2012, the largest employers in the County include:

1. Gwaltney of Smithfield (Manufacturing)
2. Isle of Wight County School Board (Government)
3. County of Isle of Wight (Government)
4. International Paper Company (Manufacturing)
5. Food Lion (Retail Trade)
6. Riverside Regional Medical Center (Health Services)
7. Packers Sanitation Service Inc (Administrative and Support)
8. Smithfield Foods (Manufacturing)
9. Cost Plus, Inc (Warehousing and Distribution)
10. Farm Fresh (Retail Trade)

In order to help retain its existing businesses as well as attract new ones, the County has several analytical tools at its disposal to help identify the strongest industries for the

County, industries with growth potential, as well as industries that may be under-represented in the County compared to other areas. These tools may also point to the County's competitive advantages which it can use to market the area to new and expanding businesses.

Location Quotient Analysis

Location quotient (LQ) analysis is a general assessment tool which can identify a locality's specialization in an industry. The LQ tool can help determine whether an industry is highly concentrated in a particular locality compared to other areas. The LQ tool compares a local industry's employment to the same industry found in other areas, such as the state or the nation. An LQ equal to one means that the sector employment in the locality is roughly the same found in other areas. An LQ greater than 1 means that the sector employment in that locality exceeds that found in other areas. An LQ less than 1 means that employment for the sector is less than the national average. Lower than average employment can indicate that a particular industry has a weaker presence in the County compared to other areas. If appropriate, the locality can then investigate ways to increase that industry's presence in the area.

In economic base theory, an industry with an LQ greater than 1 is considered to be a part of the "basic" (or non-local) sector. A basic sector industry relies heavily on non-local demand for its business. It supplies not only local demand but also exports its goods and services to other areas. A "non-basic" industry is one that depends heavily on local consumption of its goods and services. Examples of businesses that are part of the "non-basic" sector include local drug stores, dry-cleaning facilities and restaurants, because they rely on local demand for their business. Basic industries are considered the local economic "engine" because they create their own jobs as well as generate a need for "non-basic" sector businesses. In addition, because demand for basic industries is generated from outside the local area, they are insulated from downturns in local economic conditions and flagging local demand. They bring money into the local economy from other areas.

Table 2.2 illustrates the results from an LQ analysis of the Isle of Wight County economy based on employment figures for 2010. In keeping with its long history in agriculture and paper production, Isle of Wight has LQs greater than 1 in manufacturing and agriculture. These industry sectors are considered basic sector industries for the County, because they not only meet local demand for their goods and services, but also export these goods and services to other areas as well. Other "basic" sector industries for the County include Construction (NAICS 23), Management of Companies and Enterprises (NAICS 55), Transportation and Warehousing (NAICS 48), and Other Services Excluding Public Service (NAICS 81). The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) defines Other Services Excluding Public Service as comprising of establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system. Establishments in this sector are primarily engaged in activities, such as equipment and machinery repairing, promoting or administering religious

activities, grantmaking, advocacy, drycleaning and laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services.

Table 2.2 Location Quotient Analysis for Isle of Wight County

Average Annual Employment, 2010 (source: BLS, VEC)

Industry (NAICS)	U.S. TOTAL	Virginia -- Statewide	Isle of Wight County, Virginia	State Location Quotient	Local Location Quotient	% of Local Employment
Base Industry: Total, All Industries	143,068,200	2,849,874	10,081			
11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,135,500	11,728	169	0.28	**1.12**	1.7%
21 Mining	655,900	8,605	ND	0.66	NC	NC
22 Utilities	551,800	10,904	ND	0.99	NC	NC
23 Construction	5,525,600	183,147	436	1.66	**1.12**	4.3%
31 Manufacturing	11,524,000	229,867	3,238	1.00	**3.99**	32.1%
42 Wholesale Trade	5,456,100	110,071	87	1.01	0.23	0.9%
44 Retail Trade	14,413,700	398,135	996	1.39	0.98	9.9%
48 Transportation & Warehousing	4,183,300	95,844	367	1.15	**1.25**	3.6%
51 Information	2,710,900	76,158	49	1.41	0.26	0.5%
52 Finance and Insurance	5,718,300	120,115	215	1.05	0.53	2.1%
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,933,800	51,520	81	1.34	0.59	0.8%
54 Professional and Technical Services	7,441,300	382096	403	2.58	0.77	4.0%
55 Management of Companies & Enterprises	1,872,300	73,891	154	1.98	**1.17**	1.5%
56 Administrative and Waste Services	7,414,000	194,783	367	1.32	0.70	3.6%
61 Educational Services	3,155,100	59,575	ND	0.95	NC	NC
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	16,375,400	373,540	807	1.15	0.70	8.0%
71 Arts Entertainment and Recreation	1,913,300	46,546	75	1.22	0.56	0.7%
72 Accommodation and Food Services	11,135,400	294,333	770	1.33	0.98	7.6%
81 Other Services Excluding Public Admin	4,349,563	125,923	374	1.45	**1.22**	3.7%
99 Unclassified	152,667	4,939	ND	1.62	NC	NC
Total Local Government	14,032,396	347,844	410	1.24	0.41	4.1%
Total State Government	4,606,001	142,861	41	1.56	0.13	0.4%
Total Federal Government	2,980,813	175,241	45	2.95	0.21	0.4%

Footnotes:
(ND) Not Disclosable, (NC) Not calculable due to absence of data

LQ analysis provides a broad overview of the local economic situation and can serve as a general guide to which industries are faring well, are not growing, or have the potential to provide future local economic growth. For example, industries with climbing employment numbers include Retail Trade and Accommodations and Food Services. With population growth and additional emphasis on local tourism, these industry sectors could be expected to grow. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector is another example of an industry poised for future growth. This sector is one of the top ten employers in the local area and is a growth industry on the national level. Locally, it only has a LQ of .70, representing roughly 8% of local employment. The County could develop a strategy to help expand this industry locally.

Shift-Share Analysis

Another tool for assessing the County's climate for future business growth is shift-share analysis. Shift-share analysis compares local employment trends to national and local employment trends. This analysis shows how local industries are growing compared to

other areas. An industry that is growing faster here in the County than the nation may enjoy a competitive advantage by being located in the County. Further investigation is needed to identify why the industry is growing faster in the County, which may be due to such locational advantages as a skilled workforce, access to transportation networks or a favorable tax rate.

Shift-Share analysis has three components:

• **National growth share** – This component examines what local job growth would look like if it were changing at the same rate as national employment trends. The main question this tool answers is how many jobs would Isle of Wight gain or lose over a certain time frame, provided its industries were growing at the same rate as the average national employment rate.

Between 2000 and 2010, employment in the United States declined by 2%. Isle of Wight County, however, experienced an 18% decline during the same time period. Table 2.3 shows that if Isle of Wight had experienced the same employment decline as the national rate, it would have only lost 241 jobs, instead of the 2,231 jobs lost, according to statistics provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. This higher than average job loss rate could be explained by the closing of several of the County's major employers.

• **Industrial mix** – This portion of the analysis looks at how the County's employment trends are impacted by the growth or decline of its particular mix of industries. Some industries grow faster or slower than others. As a result, local employment may do better or worse depending on which and how much of a particular industry is located here. For example, manufacturing employment declined on a national level at 33%. This had a large impact on local employment levels, because the County has a large manufacturing sector.

• **Local share (Regional shift)** – Some industries grow faster or slower at the local level due to some local comparative advantage such as superior infrastructure, labor skills or market access. If an industry is growing faster at the local level than on the national level, then the local share employment number would be positive. The local component helps to identify a local area's economic strengths by pinpointing which industries may enjoy a competitive local advantage. It cannot, however identify the actual competitive advantage. It is important to identify what local factors have contributed to outperforming the national growth rate.

The actual employment change is found when all three components are added together. Positive numbers for a particular industry could indicate an industry with future growth potential for the County. Negative results could help identify a weakness in the County's business climate and signal a need for potential intervention.

Table 2.3

Isle of Wight County Shift-Share Analysis, 2000-2010

Sector (NAICS)	US Employment 2000*	US Employment 2010*	US Employment Change	US % Growth	IOW Employment 2000**	IOW Employment 2010	IOW Employment Change	IOW % Growth	Shift Share Components***			Actual Local Employment Change
									National Share	Industry Mix	Regional (Local) Share	
Total Employment	146,236,000	143,068,200	-3,167,800	-2%	12,312	10,081	-2231.00	-18%				
11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	2,396,200	2,135,500	-260,700	-11%	120	169	49.00	41%	-2.60	-10.46	62.1	49.00
21 Mining	520,400	655,900	135,500	26%	ND	ND	ND	ND	NC	NC	NC	NC
22 Utilities	601,300	551,800	-49,500	-8%	ND	ND	ND	ND	NC	NC	NC	NC
23 Construction	6,786,400	5,525,600	-1,260,800	-19%	517	436	-81.00	-16%	-11.20	-84.85	15.0	-81.00
31 Manufacturing	17,262,900	11,524,000	-5,738,900	-33%	6,509	3,238	-3271.00	-50%	-141.00	-2022.86	-1107.1	-3271.00
42 Wholesale Trade	5,933,500	5,456,100	-477,400	-8%	205	87	-118.00	-58%	-4.44	-12.05	-101.5	-118.00
44 Retail Trade	15,279,800	14,413,700	-866,100	-6%	880	996	116.00	13%	-19.06	-30.82	165.9	116.00
48 Transportation & Warehousing	4,410,300	4,183,300	-227,000	-5%	355	367	12.00	3%	-7.69	-10.58	30.3	12.00
51 Information	3,630,600	2,710,900	-919,700	-25%	166	49	-117.00	-70%	-3.60	-38.46	-74.9	-117.00
52 Finance and Insurance	5,676,700	5,718,300	41,600	1%	170	215	45.00	26%	-3.68	4.93	43.8	45.00
53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2,010,600	1,933,800	-76,800	-4%	73	81	8.00	11%	-1.58	-1.21	10.8	8.00
54 Professional and Technical Services	6,701,700	7,441,300	739,600	11%	125	403	278.00	222%	-2.71	16.50	264.2	278.00
55 Management of Companies & Enterprises	1,796,000	1,872,300	76,300	4%	ND	154	ND	ND	NC	NC	NC	NC
56 Administrative and Waste Services	8,168,300	7,414,000	-754,300	-9%	199	367	168.00	84%	-4.31	-14.07	186.4	168.00
61 Educational Services	2,390,400	3,155,100	764,700	32%	ND	ND	ND	ND	NC	NC	NC	NC
62 Health Care and Social Assistance	12,718,000	16,375,400	3,657,400	29%	434	807	373.00	86%	-9.40	134.21	248.2	373.00
71 Arts Entertainment and Recreation	1,787,900	1,913,300	125,400	7%	123	75	-48.00	-39%	-2.66	11.29	-56.6	-48.00
72 Accommodation and Food Services	10,073,500	11,135,400	1,061,900	11%	575	770	195.00	34%	-12.46	73.07	134.4	195.00
81 Other Services Excluding Public Admin	5,168,000	4,349,563	-818,437	-16%	295	374	79.00	27%	-6.39	-40.33	125.7	79.00
99 Unclassified	337,077	152,667	-184,410	-55%	ND	ND	ND	ND	NC	NC	NC	NC
Total Local Government	13,139,000	14,032,396	893,396	7%	277	410	133.00	48%	-6.00	24.84	114.2	133.00
Total State Government	4,786,000	4,606,001	-179,999	-4%	49	41	-8.00	-16%	-1.06	-0.78	-6.2	-8.00
Total Federal Government	2,865,000	2,980,813	115,813	4%	56	45	-11.00	-20%	-1.21	3.48	-13.3	-11.00
							Actual Shift Share Change		-241.06	-1998.14	41.2	**-2198.00**

*US BLS Current Employment Statistics Survey for 2000 and 2010

** Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages for 2000 and 2010

***$SS = e_i[(US^*/US)-1]+e_i[(US_i^*/US_i)-(US^*/US)]+e_i[(e_i^*/e_i)-(US_i^*/US_i)]$

e_i = local employent in industry i at the beginning of the period

e_i^* = local employment in industry i at the end of the period

US*= total US employment at the end of the period

US= total US employment at the beginning of the period

i=subscript i indicates a reference to industry i

The results of the analysis provide both expected findings as well as some new potential growth industries worthy of further exploration. Based on the shift-share totals, Isle of Wight appears to be providing a positive environment for the following industries:

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting
- Retail Trade

- Transportation and Warehousing
- Finance and Insurance
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Professional and Technical Services
- Administrative and Waste Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Other Services excluding Public Administration
- Local Government

A sector expanding nationally and growing even faster in Isle of Wight indicates a local strength. The local market share is increasing with a strong national market. These sectors include:

- Finance and Insurance
- Professional and Technical Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Local Government

A sector that sheds employment on national basis and gains employment locally (or declines at a slower pace) may indicate consolidation for that activity as a result of a local competitive advantage. Local sectors in this situation include:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Retail Trade
- Transportation and Warehousing
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
- Administrative and Waste Services
- Other Services Excluding Public Administration

Of concern are those sectors which are declining faster than the national rate. This may indicate that either competitive advantages somewhere else or local disadvantages are causing disinvestment in the County. These sectors include:

- Manufacturing
- Wholesale Trade
- Information
- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- State Government
- Federal Government

It should be noted that a reduction in employment for a particular sector does not necessarily signal a decline for that sector. For industries, automation and other investments that increase worker productivity can increase output with fewer workers. Manufacturing is a sector where employment numbers have decreased over the last 10 years, but the level of output continues to increase. Utilities and manufacturing (including paper and food manufacturing) are two sectors that demonstrate this trend. Investment in technology can translate into increased revenues for the locality, and higher productivity can result in higher wages for workers which are then spent in the local economy.

More investigation is warranted for those basic industries suffering from slower growth rates to determine what action the County could take to help improve its competitive position with these industries. Also, more analysis is warranted to determine the reasons behind the stronger than average growth rates for those industries that could one day become basic industries themselves. These competitive advantages could be used by the County to attract additional businesses to the area.

2.4 Findings

Based on the information in this section, it can be said that the residents and businesses of Isle of Wight County enjoy a quality of life equal to if not greater than the state as a whole and the nation. The County's higher than average quality of life is a powerful marketing tool in recruiting and retaining industry to the County.

Manufacturing and agriculture remain pillars of the County's economy, along with the construction industry, management of companies and enterprise, transportation and warehousing, and other services excluding public service. These industries are a vital component of the local industry in that they bring outside revenues into the County.

Target industries with future growth potential for the County could include finance and insurance, professional and technical services, health care and social assistance and accommodation and food services. These industries are growing locally and nationally and may help to diversify the local economic base.

As the County's economic landscape evolves over time, the County can regularly evaluate the health of its local economy, its quality of life and target industries using the analytical tools and statistics found in this Plan. It is recommended that this section of the report be updated on a regular basis, such as part of an annual report on the status of the local economic development efforts.

3. Isle of Wight Real Estate Market Overview

It is helpful to compare statistics for different real estate markets in the County to similar properties in neighboring communities to identify market share and trends. Identifying trends can help gauge in which markets the County may be doing well compared to neighboring localities or help identify underutilized markets with growth potential that could be expanded.

One example is the County's strong position in the agricultural industry. The majority of the County's land lies outside of its targeted growth areas, or DSDs, and has agricultural zoning. This helps to sustain the local agricultural industry. Other industries with growth potential in the County include Finance and Insurance, Professional and Technical Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance Services. The County should explore if there is adequate office space within the County to meet the growth demands of these industries and how best to market these types of real estate products to the target industries.

The real estate market summaries included in this Plan are based on analysis provided by the *2012 Hampton Roads Real Estate Market Review* by the EV Williams Center for Real Estate and Economic Development at Old Dominion University (2012 ODU Study) and the County's draft *2012 Draft Cash Proffer Study*.

3.1 Industrial Space Snapshot

According to the *2012 Hampton Roads Real Estate Market Review* by the EV Williams Center for Real Estate and Economic Development at ODU (2012 ODU Study), Isle of Wight County currently possesses approximately 3,807,023 square feet of industrial building space. This includes office-warehouse, industrial and shop facilities of 5,000 square feet or greater. The vacancy rate for Isle of Wight industrial properties included in the ODU study for 2011 was 25.75%. This represents a 7.05% increase over 2010. By comparison, the Hampton Roads regional average vacancy rate for 2011 was 12.12%, which represents a decrease over the 2010 average regional vacancy rate of 12.48%.

Isle of Wight's larger than average industrial vacancy rate may be attributable to the closure of the International Paper Mill and associated local businesses, including the Franklin Engineering and ATC Panels facilities. The vacancy rate for 2012 should show an improvement with the sale of the 330,000 square foot Johnson Development Associates building to Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, as well as the reopening of a portion of the former International Paper Mill for the new fluff paper and tissue paper manufacturing facilities.

The County also applied to join the Franklin-Southampton Enterprise Zone in 2011 in order to encourage future capital investment and employment growth by providing incentives for development in specially designated areas of the County. The State

approved three separate Enterprise Subzones in November 2011. Two of the Subzones are located near the Town of Windsor and the third Subzone is located adjacent to the City of Franklin in the Camptown DSD. The Enterprise Zone designation allows for new and expanding businesses to qualify for State and local job and real estate grants as well as expedited development review and fee waivers from the County. These incentives are offered if a business meets a minimum capital investment and job creation level.

3.2 Retail Space

Although the 2012 ODU Study included five large shopping centers in their survey of retail development for the County, the study did not include downtown stores, automotive centers or retail establishments less than 5,000 square feet. The study was also limited to the Smithfield and Carrollton areas of the County. In order to provide a more accurate description of the amount of retail space in the County, the Plan relies on recent estimates provided in the County's *2012 Draft Cash Proffer Study*. The draft Proffer study used Cushman and Wakefield Thalhimer estimates for nonresidential floor area for 2011, second quarter. This source estimates the amount of retail space in the County to be approximately 1,394,957 square feet. Given the County's population of 35,270, the County has an average retail space of approximately 40 square feet per capita. This is slightly lower than the national average of 47 square feet per capita. Past studies, such as the Route 17 Corridor Master Plan (2007), estimate there is an additional 1.6 million square feet of permitted retail development which has not yet been built to date.

The 2012 ODU study reports that the 2011 vacancy rate for the Isle of Wight properties included in the study was 1.44%, compared to 7.42% for other Southside retail properties. The vacancy rate for the Hampton Roads region overall decreased from 8.94% in 2010 to 8.51% in 2011. As the retail real estate market improves, the County could identify local retail needs and develop an appropriate outreach strategy to recruit target companies.

3.3 Office Space

The 2012 ODU Study did not include Isle of Wight County in its office space survey for the region. Instead, this Plan relies on recent estimates provided in the County's *2012 Draft Cash Proffer Study*. This study used Cushman and Wakefield Thalhimer estimates for nonresidential floor area for 2011, second quarter. This source estimates the amount of office space in the County to be approximately 269,112 square feet.

The County should explore if there is adequate office space within the County to meet the demands of local growth industries and how best to market these types of real estate products to the target industries.

According to the 2012 ODU study, the vacancy rate for Hampton Roads improved overall, decreasing to 13.5% in the 4th quarter 2011, down from the 4th quarter 2010 rate of 14.6%.

3.4 Residential Space

According to the 2012 ODU Study, the average sales price in Isle of Wight County in 2011 for new construction was $299,641, down from $317,470 in 2010 – a decrease of 5.6%. On the regional level, the average decrease in new construction sale prices was 3.4% from 2010 to 2011. Average sales prices for existing homes in the region decreased as well between 2010 and 2011 – falling approximately 4.5% from $256,000 in 2010 to $245,000 in 2011.

Sales of attached existing homes (*i.e.*, condominiums, townhomes) experienced a steep decline in Isle of Wight County between 2010 and 2011, falling 25%. The median sales price of attached existing homes in the Hampton Roads region fell from $165,000 in 2010 to $155,000 in 2011. Despite the downward trend, sales for existing attached homes, Isle of Wight saw an overall 16.18% increase in existing detached home sales between 2010 and 2011. Overall, there was an increase of 10.59% in total existing home sales in 2011 over and above 2010 sales.

The 2012 ODU Study did not include Isle of Wight County in its multifamily residential survey for the region. According to the US Census, there were 1,044 existing multifamily units in the County as of April 1, 2010. Between April 2010 and June 30, 2011, an additional 144 multifamily units were added according to County building permit data, representing a 13.8% increase. The region overall saw a large increase in new, permitted multifamily units between 2010 and 2011. In 2010, there was a total of 761 permitted units compared to more than 2,400 units permitted in 2011.

3.5 Findings

Recent property trends in Isle of Wight County generally follow regional and national trends, showing declines following the national economic recession beginning in 2008 with slight positive increases beginning in 2011 for most real estate markets.

As the national, state and local economy improve, the County could explore the possibility of performing a market study for each of the affected real estate markets to determine the demand for different real estate products, especially when it comes to recruiting target industries. The demand for quantity of each type of product could be assessed as well as quality type, make absorption assumptions, and identify competitive advantages.

One way to effectively market the County to potential new or expanding existing businesses is to strive to meet their space needs. The County could develop a strategy to interview existing and potential new businesses to determine key factors in their

location decisions and where they look to find real estate information. The County could then revise its real estate marketing strategy based on this information.

4. Community Outreach and Participation

4.1 Community Outreach Summary

In order to accurately portray the community's vision for its economic future, the revised Economic Development Strategic Plan actively engaged stakeholders from the different sectors of the local economy, including industrial, commercial, real estate developers, community organizations, and the residents themselves.

The stakeholder and public input process allows the County to listen and respond to the needs of local businesses and residents alike. It will help to improve local competitiveness issues and create a better business climate.

4.2 Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

The County of Isle of Wight held its first community stakeholder meeting on Wednesday, July 25, 2012, at the Smithfield Center. The purpose of the Plan Update is to review past findings and examine how things have changed in the last twelve years since the last Plan was adopted in 2000. More than 35 representatives from the County's businesses, community groups, elected and appointed officials, and County staff attended the meeting.

The evening's events included presentations by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership followed by a group exercise in which participants were asked to identify the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, known as a SWOT exercise for short, for the County's future economic development efforts. Although the complete results from all groups are included as appendix to the Plan, the most frequently mentioned strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are listed below.

<u>Most Mentioned Strengths</u>

Quality of life/lifestyle/geography/small town feel
Space/undeveloped land/land rich
Proximity to ports
Rail
Tax structure/low tax rate
Good infrastructure
Roadways
Local schools/good education K-12/community college/Headstart
History and tourism
Headquartered major companies/Fortune 500 Companies
Workforce/skilled workforce

Most Mentioned Weaknesses

Workforce housing is non-existent ($20,000-$40,000 – nurses, teachers)(proffers)/no rental housing
Lack of public transportation
Lack of amenities/entertainment options
- Lack of recreation for teens and elderly
- Hard to attract young professionals (no social life)
Road structure
Not connected to region politically (Richmond?)/lack of regional political clout – leadership
- Identity/regionalism
- Not as much political influence as larger localities

Lack of retail
Lack of rooftops/small population makes it difficult to attract jobs
Lack of money for infrastructure
Lack of political vision for growth

Most Popular Opportunities

Route 460 (new) – business opportunities
Strategic location/space
Broadband/telecommuting/develop technology
Tourism

Most Mentioned Threats

Lack of vision
Competition for business from surrounding communities/regional competition
Unfunded mandates (i.e., Stormwater, Chesapeake Bay, Clean Water Act)/Federal/State
Graying of County/lack of generational diversity
Recession – economy is retracting/weak economy
Competition from Savannah/New York/New Jersey

Economic Development staff conducted an additional SWOT exercise with the newly formed Windsor Young Professionals group on August 8, 2012. The results of this exercise are also included as an appendix to the Plan.

During the month of September, Economic Development staff conducted interviews with individual Board of Supervisor members to gather their views on the future direction of economic development in the County. Each Board member was asked to give his or her ideas on what they felt were the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in its economic development program. The Board member

interviews coincided with the Economic Development Strategic Plan stakeholder group SWOT exercise held on July 25, 2012.

Staff compiled the results of the Board member interviews and included them as an appendix to the Plan.

4.3 Visioning Exercise

The purpose of the second stakeholders meeting was to use the results of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) exercise conducted at the first stakeholders meeting to develop a vision for the future of economic development as well as goals, objectives and an action plan. The second stakeholders meeting was held on August 29, 2012, at the Windsor Ruritan Club. There were sixteen stakeholders in attendance as well as five staff members from Economic Development.

Visioning is the process by which a community imagines the future it wants and plans how to achieve it. A vision is important to the Economic Development Strategic Plan, because it achieves the following:

- Seeks to shape the future based on shared community values;
- Guides decision making; and
- Promotes community buy-in for implementation of the plan.

The stakeholders were asked to form several smaller groups to facilitate interaction among others and were asked to spend fifteen minutes addressing each of the following questions:

1) Identify Shared Values - If we are successful at everything we are trying to accomplish today, what words would you use to describe our community in five years? (What do we want to preserve, create and change in the community?)
2) Create a list of goals that will achieve the values to be contained in the community vision.
3) List objectives with specific action steps to implement goals.

The results from the visioning exercise are included as an appendix to the Plan. County staff utilized the feedback received during the stakeholder meetings to draft the vision, goals, objectives and action steps found in Chapter 5.

4.4 Developing the Draft Plan

The Board of Supervisors, stakeholder group members, and the community at large was invited to review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan. Comments received on the draft Plan are included as an appendice to the Plan.

5. Economic Development Strategic Plan Vision Statement and Goals

Listed below is the draft Vision Statement, Goals, Objectives and Action Steps for the Draft 2012 Economic Development Strategic Plan. The draft Vision Statement and Goals resulted from the feedback received from the Economic Development Strategic Plan Stakeholders group meetings. The draft Vision Statement represents a combination of the shared values listed by Stakeholder group members when asked what words they would use to describe their ideal community in five years. Goals, objectives, and action steps are derived from the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) exercise undertaken by the Stakeholder group members.

Vision Statement:

Isle of Wight County strives to be a prosperous, independent community firmly grounded in its rural heritage that provides a welcoming environment for businesses and residents with diverse opportunities for employment, education, recreation, civic engagement, technology, commerce and trade, housing and lifestyle choice and that capitalizes on the County's rich historical, cultural and agricultural heritage as a means of revenue growth and maintaining its quality of life.

Goals, Objectives and Action Steps:

I. **Goal:** Becoming a fully realized local economy to serve current residents and draw new residents

   a. Pursue local economic diversity to expand tax base and provide additional employment opportunities
      i. Develop a list of target industries
      ii. Focus on clean industries
   b. Ensure sound financial management of the County
      i. Maintain County's comparably low tax rate
      ii. Provide timely information on the County budget
   c. Promote and support additional business and retail services within the County
   d. Investigate and capitalize on County's competitive advantages
      i. Identify locational advantages enjoyed by larger firms (local Fortune 500) and new businesses moving in
      ii. Market proximity of County to Hampton Roads/Richmond/other major metropolitan areas (lower operational costs, quality of life, close to conveniences)
      iii. Market availability of competitively-priced land for development and infrastructure (water, road network, rail, natural gas, competitive electrical power, broadband)
      iv. Market skilled workforce

v. Market quality of life (small town feel, access to healthcare, safety)
vi. Explore business opportunities created by the new Route 460

e. Promote adequate availability of workforce housing
   i. Include information on the County's affordable housing policy to developers as appropriate

f. Embrace technology throughout the government and community
   i. Power grid telecom capabilities need to be validated
   ii. Develop broadband capacity
   iii. Promote telecommuting
   iv. Identify areas of the County where technology is lacking

II. **<u>Goal</u>:** Promote throughout the County the agricultural and natural resources as tax and revenue generating resources

a. Continue to support the County's current growth management policy while promoting growth within the County's development service districts
   i. Encourage the use of large lot subdivisions that carry conservation easements

b. Assist in preserving the County's quality of life, rural landscape, and small town lifestyle
   i. Promote farm and forest land preservation along with open space preservation by evaluating the PACE Program, looking for alternative sources of funding, and promoting the donation of conservation easements
   ii. Establish new and support existing farm markets as a means for encouraging agribusiness development, building community relations, and creating tourism opportunities
   iii. Recognize that the maintenance of a rural character through the continued use of farms is critical to cultural heritage based tourism and quality of life

c. Promote agriculture industry friendly policies and ordinances
   i. Promote zoning strategies that maintain farm and forest land
   ii. Adopt additional agricultural by-right uses as needed to remove unnecessary impediments to encourage adaptive reuse of farm buildings and to create new opportunities for rural activities consistent with maintaining a rural atmosphere
   iii. Carefully review appropriate ordinances dealing with rural and agriculture land uses to assess whether they are impeding the maintenance of a rural economy

d. Promote agritourism

i. Partner with private business and Tourism Department to create and promote agritourism ventures and opportunities

e. Seek and promote niche businesses (i.e. organic, free range, niche crops)
    i. Partner with Virginia State University to educate and encourage the development of these industries

f. Include the equine community as a fundamental component of Rural Economic Development and provide for its expansion
    i. Partner with the equine community and Virginia Cooperative Extension to provide educational workshops to new and existing horse owners to foster responsible horse ownership
    ii. Determine the needs of the equine community and assist them in growing

g. Partner with Isle of Wight Schools to facilitate a relationship between the students and local farms
    i. Encourage schools to grow farm products to use in school cafeterias
    ii. Encourage local farm tours as field trips
    iii. Assist in growing the farm-to-school program among our local farmers

III. <u>Goal</u>: Develop a local skilled labor force

a. Strengthen local workforce vocational education
    i. Establish an apprenticeship program
    ii. Establish a professional mentoring program
    iii. Create incentives for businesses to establish workforce development programs
    iv. Promote Paul D. Camp Community College community scholars program
b. Strengthen the system of higher education in County
    i. Expansion of community college to northern end
    ii. Develop a niche, centralized workforce development center to train in new skills
c. Continue to support and partner with Isle of Wight County Schools
    i. Strive for continual improvement in test scores
    ii. Support the continuation of the pre-kindergarten program
    iii. Identify networking opportunities between local businesses and schools
    iv. Promote youth financial literacy programs with the schools
    v. Promote the use of technology within the schools

IV. <u>Goal:</u> Become a fully realized cultural tourism destination

a. Preserve and promote access to waterways

i. Promote water quality protection to ensure its viability as a resource

b. Continue to promote Smithfield as a cultural center as well as explore establishing other cultural centers in the central and southern part of the County
c. Continue to capitalize on the County's rich historical resources
d. Promote the agritourism industry in the County
e. Investigate the opportunity for promoting the County as a retirement destination
f. Cultivate a wide range of recreational, cultural and social opportunities for all age groups
g. Capitalize on the substantial hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activity opportunities in the County
    i. Provide more public access to open space areas (like the Blackwater tract)
    ii. Build additional playgrounds
    iii. Establish wetland mitigation banks as a way of preserving open space
    iv. Establish a trail easement program
h. Explore the opportunity for a centrally located Agricultural Exposition Centre for events/agricultural shows

V. **Goal**: In the central and south areas of the County, becoming a fully realized world-class logistics Center

a. Dedicate funding to prepare intermodal park
    i. Explore private sector investment opportunities in the development of the park
b. Promote the County's strategic location and available acreage for development associated with the Panama Canal expansion and proximity to the Ports of Virginia
    i. Partner with the Ports of Virginia to market the County's strategic location in relation to the Ports
    ii. Attend maritime-related marketing activities

VI. **Goal**: Promote economic diversity by implementing existing infrastructure plans and strategically planning for future infrastructure needs

a. Allocate a percentage of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget to improve the cultural tourism and resident quality of life (*i.e.*, Parks and Recreation) resources through these quantified steps:
    i. Allocation of a percentage of CIP to other items besides public buildings
    ii. Allocation in CIP to all County departments as appropriate within five years
b. Identify opportunities for public and alternative transportation

i. Develop a County-wide system of trails and bike lanes
ii. Explore opportunities for high speed rail and light rail

c. Enhance road and rail connections
i. Explore public/private partnerships

VII. Goal: Becoming a model county for progressive and cooperative leadership

a. Address and correct the perception that the County, School and Town leaderships are not working cooperatively to a common vision
i. Engage in team building between the County and Town leadership
b. Support and assist communication between the Towns and the community
c. Increase engagement with diverse community groups
i. Engage younger members of the community through the use of social media and daytime meetings
ii. Engage other local, state and federal agencies
d. Improve working relationships with regional organizations and other local governments/governing bodies
i. Strengthen County's identity in the region
ii. Explore regional business opportunities
e. Engage the Board of Supervisors in Economic Development planning process
i. Engage County leadership in dialogue on best practices
ii. Engage in regular long-range planning
iii. Look at the long-term effects of decision-making
iv. Establish a long-range vision

VIII. Goal: Create a welcoming environment for businesses and residents

a. Make it easier to start a business in the County
i. Establish a series of checklists for County services to facilitate the development review process (County-wide)
ii. Continue to review development restrictions and regulations and their impact to small businesses and rural development by lowering costs for businesses, providing more efficient processes, and be relevant to today
iii. Explore how to make the Health Department approval process more user friendly
iv. Systematic coaching of entrepreneurs/small business owners
v. Continue to explore the concept of a business and/or retail incubator
vi. Investigate ways to facilitate business owner transition between older and younger generation, such as through workshops that provide networking opportunities
b. Make it easier to find information in the County
i. Create a local business directory profile

ii. Create online business directory

IX. **Goal:** Educate the citizens about economic development.

a. Provide opportunities through social interaction through “retro” (face-to-face) communication
    i. Attend local trade shows, business expos, and civic association meetings
    ii. Prepare an annual “State of Economic Development in the County” presentation
b. Educate citizens about the future value of the intermodal park
c. Educate the silent majority on the mission through quantified action steps, including:
    i. Quarterly communications meetings (“town hall meetings”) for information sharing, with 50% of the quarterly communication meetings hosted by community groups or private citizens
    ii. A “Vision for Isle of Wight” presence at the County Fair within two years
    iii. Social media deployed with a measurable impact
d. Increase visibility of department staff to external customers through increased community interaction.
e. Provide an annual Economic Development Strategic Plan implementation benchmark report

6. A Way Forward for Isle of Wight County

It is readily evident through the Economic Development Strategic Planning process that Isle of Wight County strives to be a progressive community that embraces change while protecting the integrity of its rich cultural and historical heritage. The analytical research and community input shows strong support for education, workforce development and community engagement that informs and promotes innovation and entrepreneurship. There is also strong support for investing in physical and technological infrastructure that results in a high quality of life and that enables the County to become competitive in the global marketplace. The common theme echoed throughout the community meetings is that the County should capitalize on its unique identity, its small town charm and friendly nature. The County should be a place where people want to be - a place that cannot be mistaken for anywhere else.

Now that the community has given a direction to the future economic development efforts for the County, it is the responsibility of County leaders and staff to inform and engage the community to create innovative ways to implement the goals and objectives laid out in the Plan.

Appendix A

2000 Economic Development Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives Assessment

2000 Strategic Plan for Economic Development
Priorities, Objectives and Action Plan – Status Report 2012

Priority 1: New Business Attraction Development	**Status**
Develop a target industries list using filters that reflect community values/priorities	**On-going**
A. Evaluate previous studies for their relevance	Completed
B. Ensure that targeted industries are compatible with local economic and social conditions	**On-going**
C. Coordinate targets with other agencies marketing the community.	**On-going**
D. Publish and maintain targeted industries list for review by interested parties	Completed
E. Periodically reevaluate list to ensure it remains current.	**On-going**
F. Utilize targeted industries list as a benchmark when developing marketing efforts and initiatives.	**On-going**
Establish a regional niche.	**On-going**
A. Utilize the SWOT analysis performed by the task force to classify attributes that distinguish Isle of Wight County from other communities in the region.	Completed
B. Publicize those attributes that make the community unique.	**On-going**
C. Convince regional communities that these attributes are an asset for them.	**On-going**
D. Identify actions that can be taken to further develop these attributes or to overcome deficiencies that minimize them.	**On-going**
E. Work closely with other communities and regional groups on unilateral initiatives and, where possible, ensure that Isle of Wight County is recognized and included on the basis of its unique attributes.	**On-going**
Establish an incentive policy based on sound cost/benefit analysis.	Completed
A. Review current policy.	Completed
B. Review policies from other communities.	Completed
C. Draft revised policy for review by the EDA and Board of Supervisors.	Completed
D. Ensure that the revised policy treats existing businesses the same as prospective firms.	Completed
Provide support and foster growth of entrepreneurial business opportunities.	**On-going**
A. Establish an existing business call program that includes entrepreneurial firms and small businesses.	**On-going**
B. Develop a recognition program honoring the “Entrepreneur of the Year” for award during Business Appreciation Week.	Completed
C. Expand relationship with the Small Business Development Center.	**On-going**
D. Develop a list of resource materials and contacts for distribution to interested entrepreneurs.	Completed
E. Identify short-comings to address as a future program of work.	**On-going**
F. Sponsor or support professional seminars or courses geared towards providing assistance to entrepreneurs.	**On-going**
G. Support the Chamber of Commerce in its efforts to assist entrepreneurs.	**On-going**
H. Conduct an incubator feasibility study.	**On-going**
I. Meet with local lenders to receive their input regarding the capital needs of local entrepreneurs.	**On-going**
J. Organize a small business assistance committee.	**On-going**

Develop and execute a marketing plan.	**On-going**
A. Compile and maintain demographic information in an attractive, comprehensive community profile.	**On-going**
B. Compile and maintain relevant site and building data. Produce marketing materials featuring the most appropriate sites and buildings.	**On-going**
C. Automate response system that includes the marketing data and materials to ensure the rapid and comprehensive reply to prospect inquiries.	**On-going**
D. Attend trade shows to identify prospects, make industry contacts and develop a better understanding of specific industry sectors.	**On-going**
E. Conduct marketing trips to meet with prospects and consultants collectively or individually.	**On-going**
F. Ensure that all communications and materials used in economic development present a favorable and attractive image of the community.	**On-going**
G. Develop an annual budget, including travel, that enables direct and response marketing.	**On-going**
H. Produce an annual report highlighting significant business activity in Isle of Wight County for internal and external use.	**On-going**
Priority 2: Existing Business Development	
Develop strategies for establishing business support services to help local businesses.	**On-going**
A. Establish local and regional business networks to provide a base of support and a means of cooperation for individual businesses.	**On-going**
B. Identify existing business clusters.	**On-going**
C. Establish business development seminars and workforce development training and development programs to assist existing businesses.	**On-going**
D. Investigate the potential for international trade, and where possible, assist local businesses interested in exploring or engaging in this.	**On-going**
E. Develop relationships with regional, state and Federal agencies such as the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, Virginia Department of Business Assistance, Virginia Chamber of Commerce and US Department of Commerce to encourage the delivery of their services to local businesses.	**On-going**
F. Provide incentives for expansion and growth of existing industries.	**On-going**
G. Sponsor annual Business Appreciation activities and ceremonies.	**On-going**
H. Organize an existing business call program.	**On-going**
Priority 3: Develop a rural/agricultural business strategy.	
Explore means of assisting farmers to achieve greater profitability.	**On-going**
A. Help facilitate new forms of rural financing and encourage traditional lending sources to continue their support of agricultural enterprises.	**On-going**
B. Focus commercial agriculture on high value crops for which there is strong market demand and higher producer profits.	**On-going**
C. Facilitate the establishment of an agricultural cooperative to access new markets and new methods, and to increase penetration into existing markets.	**On-going**
D. Create an organization dedicated toward increasing the rural economy.	Completed
E. Encourage the leasing of unused farm acreage for agriculture.	**On-going**
F. Encourage young people to seek a career in agriculture.	**On-going**
G. Review existing legal and administrative requirements to determine their appropriateness for a rural economy.	**On-going**
H. Encourage farmers/landowners to maintain or rehabilitate farm labor housing.	**On-going**

I. Search for additional commercial by-right uses to be authorized for the rural economy. J. Designate an ombudsman to serve as a direct link between farmers/rural businesses and the County/state government relative to issues affecting the rural economy. K. Establish farmer's markets to provide an outlet for higher value production and as a tourism attraction.	**On-going** Completed Completed
Develop new initiatives most likely to result in significant increases in the rural economy.	**On-going**
A. Include the equine industry as a fundamental component of rural economic development and provide for its expansion. B. Recruit agricultural biotechnology companies for demonstration ventures and relocation to Isle of Wight County. C. Recruit appropriate new businesses for location in a rural setting. D. Support tourism's efforts to promote authentic rural tourism and active recreation experiences.	**On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**
Secure the natural resource base of rural land.	**On-going**
A. Create rural performance standards for residential development that will promote greater protection for and more compatible use of the rural resource base. B. Recognize that the maintenance of a rural character through the continued use of farms is critical to cultural heritage-based tourism and quality of life. C. Give greater recognition to the horse industry and equestrian activities as a component of the rural economy, and afford equine husbandry the same benefits and encouragement extended to other forms of agriculture. D. Adopt additional agricultural by-right uses and remove unnecessary use-oriented impediments to encourage adaptive use of farm buildings and farm lands and to create new opportunities for rural activities consistent with the maintenance of the rural countryside. E. Create incentives to promote and assist in the preservation and reclamation of farm buildings and structures in order to ensure availability for future agricultural use. F. Encourage the use of large lot subdivisions that carry open space easements. G. Review and strengthen the opportunities for cluster residential development to avoid high density and infrastructure-dependent development. H. Carefully review the appropriate ordinances dealing with rural and agricultural land use to assess whether they are impeding the maintenance of a rural economy. I. Immediately begin the process of establishing a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program management and protection. J. Strengthen the Land Use Tax Program as a tool for farmland preservation and natural resource. K. Develop and implement policies that will ensure and protect the availability of adequate water resources to support and grow the rural economy. L. Encourage and promote the establishment of voluntary overlay Historic or Rural Districts. M. Upon adoption of these rural and agricultural policies into the Comprehensive Plan, immediately begin implementing them through the development of appropriate ordinances, standards and regulations.	**On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** Completed Completed **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**

Priority 4: Real Estate Asset Development	
Identify land/locations appropriate for business development	**On-going**
A. Qualify properties currently being marketed by local, regional and state officials. B. Establish an interactive database to track marketable sites and buildings. C. Develop and maintain relationships with local, state and regional realtors to ensure that the County receives the most current information regarding property listings and that realtors receive similar information from the County. D. Develop a policy to provide for commissions to be paid to realtors who work with Isle of Wight County to locate prospects within the community. E. Conduct a comprehensive review of tax maps and other land use documents to find additional properties and qualify them for their potential as marketable sites. F. Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan contains appropriate sites within the Development Service Districts. G. Inventory telecommunication resources throughout the County and develop strategies to enhance and utilize those assets for economic development.	**On-going** Completed **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**
Establish and/or market business/industrial parks.	**On-going**
A. Develop a Capital Improvements Plan that includes the acquisition and development of sites and buildings, including speculative and incubator space. B. Secure grant funding as available to assist in the development of business/industrial parks. C. Work with the private sector to establish public/private partnerships and to encourage private development of sites and buildings. D. Develop materials and strategies to market sites and buildings that are suitable for economic development, regardless of ownership. E. Further qualify marketable sites and buildings by conducting or supporting additional engineering work as may be necessary to convince a prospect of a property's viability. F. Secure option agreements and other real estate sureties on qualified sites and buildings to guarantee truth-in-marketing and ensure that a marketable site can be acquired under reasonable terms.	**On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**
Support/utilize town business development opportunities.	**On-going**
A. Treat properties identified by the Towns of Smithfield and Windsor for business development in identical fashion to those located in the County. B. Work with Towns to support the location of commercial and retail businesses within their jurisdiction. C. Coordinate and partner with the Towns on inventorying and qualifying properties within the Towns that are suitable for economic development and on the acquisition and development of those sites as appropriate. D. Assist the Towns in developing appropriate economic development strategies (including inventive policies), marketing efforts and tools as necessary or requested.	**On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**
Priority 5: Workforce Development	
Identify, develop and utilize the internal (local) workforce (k-12, existing workforce, residents).	**On-going**
A. Establish a local Workforce Development Policy Committee. B. Develop linkages with local institutions engaged in workforce development. **C.** Create and execute a strategic plan designed to meet the needs of current and prospective employers relative to the internal workforce.	Completed **On-going** **On-going**

Participate in efforts to expand the capability of the external (regional) workforce.	**On-going**
A. Work closely with the Hampton Roads Workforce Investment Board. B. Assist local businesses in locating, recruiting and training available workers.	**On-going** **On-going**
Utilize existing educational assets and community partnerships to enhance workforce capability.	**On-going**
A. Work with the public schools, colleges, technical schools and other relevant employee training organizations to ensure adequate enrollment in fields of study utilized by local businesses, adequate course offerings to satisfy local business consumption and adequate course content to meet local business expectations. B. Assist in establishing local mentoring, job shadowing and apprenticeship programs.	**On-going** **On-going**
Priority 6: Infrastructure Development	
Participate in the planning and advocacy efforts necessary to guarantee the development of infrastructure necessary to support new and existing businesses that shall include, at a minimum, the following:	**On-going**
A. Utilities (water & sewer). B. Technology. C. Transportation. D. Emergency services, child care & health care. E. Lodging/housing opportunities.	**On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going** **On-going**

Appendix B

Stakeholder Groups
SWOT Results

August 8, 2012

TO: **Members, Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors**

FROM: **Amy M. Ring, Business Development Manager**

SUBJECT: **SWOT Analysis Results from July 25, 2012, Economic Development Strategic Plan Stakeholders Meeting**

The County of Isle of Wight kicked off its Economic Development Strategic Plan Update with the first community stakeholder meeting on Wednesday, July 25, 2012, at the Smithfield Center. The purpose of the Plan Update is to review past findings and examine how things have changed in the last twelve years since the last Plan was adopted in 2000. More than 35 representatives from the County's businesses, community groups, elected and appointed officials, and County staff attended the meeting.

The evening's events included presentations by Rob McClintock and Brian Kroll from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership followed by a group exercise in which participants were asked to identify the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the County's future economic development. Although the complete results from all five groups are attached to this memo, the most frequently mentioned strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are listed below. The number of groups that included each item is included in parentheses.

Most Mentioned Strengths

Quality of life/lifestyle/geography/small town feel (5)
Space/undeveloped land/land rich (4)
Proximity to ports (4)
Rail (4)
Tax structure/low tax rate (4)
Good infrastructure (3)
Roadways (3)
Local schools/good education K-12/community college/Headstart (3)
History and tourism (3)
Headquartered major companies/Fortune 500 Companies (3)
Workforce/skilled workforce (3)

Most Mentioned Weaknesses

Workforce housing is non-existent ($20,000-$40,000 – nurses, teachers)(proffers)/no rental housing(4)
Lack of public transportation (4)
Lack of amenities/entertainment options(3)
- Lack of recreation for teens and elderly
- Hard to attract young professionals (no social life)

Road structure (3)
Not connected to region politically (Richmond?)/lack of regional political clout – leadership (3)
- Identity/regionalism
- Not as much political influence as larger localities

Lack of retail (2)
Lack of rooftops/small population makes it difficult to attract jobs (2)
Lack of money for infrastructure (2)
Lack of political vision for growth (2)

Most Popular Opportunities

Route 460 (new) – business opportunities (3)
Strategic location/space (2)
Broadband/telecommuting/develop technology (2)
Tourism (2)

Most Mentioned Threats

Lack of vision (3)
Competition for business from surrounding communities/regional competition (3)
Unfunded mandates (i.e., Stormwater, Chesapeake Bay, Clean Water Act)/Federal/State (2)
Graying of County/Lack of generational diversity (2)
Recession – economy is retracting/weak economy (2)
Competition from Savannah/New York/New Jersey (2)

Stakeholders will be asked to use the results of the exercise to develop a vision for the future of economic development as well as goals, objectives and an action plan at a second stakeholder meeting scheduled for August 29, 2012 at the Windsor Ruritan Club. The presentations and results from the stakeholder meetings will be available on the County's website.

Economic Development Strategic Plan Stakeholders Meeting
July 25, 2012

SWOT Analysis Results

Meeting participants were asked to identify the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the County's future economic development. Participants separated into five smaller groups. Meeting attendees as well as the complete results from all five groups are listed below. The number of groups that included each item is included in parentheses. No number is included if the item was included on only one list.

Stakeholders will be asked to use the results of the exercise to develop a vision for the future of economic development as well as goals, objectives and an action plan at a second stakeholder meeting tentatively scheduled for August 29. The presentations and results from the stakeholder meetings will be available on the County's website.

Attendees

Patty Fleming, Windsor Town Council
Durwood Scott, Windsor Town Council
Jean Barcroft, Pink Flamingo Realty
Vincent C. Carollo, JVC Holdings, LLC
Douglas Caskey, County Administrator, Isle of Wight County
Diana McFarland, Smithfield Times
Carter Williams, Mayor, Town of Smithfield
Denise N. Tynes, Smithfield Town Council, Isle of Wight County School Board
Julie Hull, Tidewater Physical Therapy, Inc.
William Saunders, Town of Smithfield/Isle of Wight County Planning Commission
John Graham, Christian Outreach Program
Bill Riddick, Attorney
Rick Bodson, Isle of Wight Arts League
Pete Carr, Farmers Bank
Cecil Byrum, Byrum Family Farms, Inc.
Constance Rhodes, Isle of Wight-Smithfield-Windsor Chamber of Commerce
Nancy Guill, Isle of Wight County Planning Commission
Lisa Peterson, Opportunity Inc.
Dick Holland, Farmers Bank
Allison Williams, Daily Press
Jeff Ringer, Arengee
Judy Winslow, Smithfield and Isle of Wight County Tourism
Grace Keen, Isle of Wight Citizens Association
Eddie Wrightson, Isle of Wight County General Services
Carolyn Keen, Isle of Wight Citizens Association
Carroll Keen, Isle of Wight Citizens Association

Ed Easter
Beverly Walkup, Isle of Wight County Planning and Zoning
Matthew Smolnik, Isle of Wight County Planning and Zoning
Henry Morgan, BCP
David Moose, KBL Real Estate
Randy Betz, Paul D. Camp Community College
Juliette Batten, Zuni Presbyterian Home and Family Services
Richard Turner
Rob McClintock, VEDP
Brian Kroll, VEDP
Lisa Perry, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Rachel Chieppa, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Gloria Spratly, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Kristi Sutphin, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Amy Ring, Isle of Wight Economic Development

<u>Strengths</u>

Good infrastructure (3)
Water (2)
Access to waterways
Modeling-simulation concentration
Route 460 (2)
Rural (2)
Space/Undeveloped land/Land rich (4)
Moderately priced land
Industrial property
Industrial park (2)
Location (2)
Proximity to ports (4)
Panama Canal
Rail (4)
Roadways (3)
Ability to manage growth
Local/good education K-12/schools/community college/Headstart (3)
Workforce vocational education (2)
Pre-K education good/seamless transition
Smithfield culture
History and tourism (3)
Financial opportunity/banks
Tax structure/low tax rate (4)
State support
Headquartered major companies/Fortune 500 Companies (3)
Recent business moving in (2)
Momentum created by new businesses moving in

New home construction
Pro-active ED staff
Network of organizations/people
Strong relationships with development team
Highly qualified/dedicated County staff (2)
Whale hunting/dolphin breeding
Emergency response
Access to healthcare (2)
Agricultural community (2)
Quality of life/lifestyle/geography/small town feel (5)
Median income higher than average
Part of Hampton Roads region
Regional recognition
Broadband/ natural gas (2)
Better communication
Workforce/skilled workforce (3)

Weaknesses

Pockets of technology lacking
Lack hospital
Reliance on neighbors for services (i.e., hospital)
Traffic
Workforce housing is non-existent ($20,000-$40,000 – nurses, teachers)(proffers)/no rental housing(4)
Lack of retail (2)
Retailers lack customer service/immaturity
Lack of rooftops/small population makes it difficult to attract jobs (2)
Geography – low population density
Overdevelopment in northern part of the County
Fragmented community
Lack of amenities/entertainment options(3)
- Lack of recreation for teens and elderly
- Hard to attract young professionals (no social life)
Lack of tech jobs
Too many low skill/low paying jobs
Location of workforce center not near population (need central)
Lack of higher education in County
School system/low test scores
Dependence upon 2-3 big businesses
Lack of public transportation (4)
Lack of support for alternative transportation
No bike lanes
Road structure (3)
Lack of money for infrastructure (2)

Lack of funding for Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park
Not connected to region politically (Richmond?)/lack of regional political clout – Leadership (3)
- Identity/regionalism
- Not as much as larger localities

Better intergovernmental communities – need team players
Citizen's attitude towards change
Diversity of residents' perspectives
Same people in community networks
Lack of financial incentives
Financial accountability
Budget/taxes
Planning and zoning process (ordinances)
Lack of flexibility in County's rules/regulations
Leadership at County level
Lack of political vision for growth (2)
Perception that County is rural only
NIMBY-ism
BOS not engaged in ED planning process
Bad working relationship between County and towns
Bad relationship between BOS and School Board
Power grid telecom capabilities need to be validated

<u>Opportunities</u>

Strategic location/space (2)
Panama Canal expansion
Ports
Private/public partnerships
Regional push/business opportunities
Capitalize on increased recognition
Expansion of community college to northern end
Develop niche workforce development center to train in new skills
Paul D. Camp Community College
Schools
Broadband/telecommuting/develop technology (2)
Ag-friendly
Agritourism
Niche agribusiness (organic/free-range)
Local food movement
Regional/national sports facilities
Route 460 (new) (3) – business opportunities
Ability to enhance road/rail connections
Improve County processes
-Lower costs for businesses
-Efficiency/low cost

-Must be relevant to today (fundamental)
Industrial development
Industrial park
Develop infrastructure
Business/retail incubator
Leverage IP/GMCR successes
Recruitment of prime industries (green industry)
Systematic coaching of entrepreneurs/small business owners
Opportunity for minority companies
Take care of existing business
Promote local business
Recognize/identify opportunities (and act on them)
Retirement market
Tourism (2)
Engage County leadership in dialogue on best practices

Threats

Saying "No"
Educational attainment
Nothing to do /no amenities
Unfunded mandates (i.e., Stormwater, Chesapeake Bay, Clean Water Act)/Federal/State (2)
Floodzones
Certain development restrictions
Lack of clean water
Tolls
Flat growth in population
Graying of County/Lack of generational diversity (2)
Close-mindedness
No place to spend money once they get here
Cuts in defense budget
Downsizing military bases
Low tax rate (need services – OK to raise rate)
Lack of long-range planning collectively with communication
Failing to look at the long-term effects
Lack of vision (3)
Lack of knowledge driving the County agenda
Silent majority
Citizen apathy
Failure to recruit industry
Loss of existing industry
Recession – economy is retracting/weak economy (2)
Lack of infrastructure planning
Competition for business from surrounding communities/regional competition (3)
Competition between County and towns

Competition from Savannah/New York/New Jersey (2)
New leadership – new direction?
Lack of funding
Lack of infrastructure

Isle of Wight County Economic Development Strategic Plan
Windsor Young Professionals Stakeholders Meeting
Farmer's Bank, Windsor
August 8, 2012

SWOT Analysis Results

Meeting participants were asked to identify the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the County's future economic development. Meeting attendees as well as the complete results from the group are listed below.

Stakeholders will be asked to use the results of the exercise to develop a vision for the future of economic development as well as goals, objectives and an action plan at a second stakeholder meeting scheduled for August 29, 2012, at the Windsor Ruritan Club between 6:00 PM and 8:00 PM. The presentations and results from all the stakeholder meetings are also available on the County's Economic Development website at www.iwced.com.

Attendees

Jonathan Thompson, Community Electric Cooperative
Chris Alphin, Commonweath Gin
Erin Park, Farmers Bank
Adam Bryant, BBH, PLC
Kevin Goerger, Colonial Farm Credit
Kristy DeJarnette, Farmers Bank
Chad Rountree, Farmers Bank
Sarae S. Joyner, Parr Funeral Home
Dana Stephenson Roderick, Images to Intrigue Photography by Dana
Rachel Chieppa, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Gloria Spratly, Isle of Wight Economic Development
Amy Ring, Isle of Wight Economic Development

Strengths

- Rural area/small-town feel
- Industrial availability/land purchased by County
- Closeness to Hampton Roads/Richmond/other major metropolitan areas
  -lower cost of living
  -rural living but still close to conveniences
- Safety
- Infrastructure – rail, new Route 460, utilities (gas, power)
- Broadband
- Co-op power
- School system

- Hunting and fishing/outdoor activities
- Horse industry
- Ports
- Low tax rate
- Community/civic associations

Weaknesses

- Pre-K education
- No communication from Town of Windsor-don't have information on what's going in community
- EMS response times outside of Towns
- Waste management
- Budget management
- Lack of small retail
- Emphasis on Smithfield
- Lack of engagement from younger groups
- No daytime public meetings (need occasional daytime town hall meeting)
- Dominion VA power

Opportunities

- All weaknesses could be turned into opportunities
- Business owner aging/aging population can lead to turnover of businesses to younger generation
- Passenger rail
- New Route 460
- New businesses locating in County
- Bike park/trails/playgrounds
- More public access to open space areas (like the Blackwater tract)
- Wetland mitigation banks
- Trail easement program
- Centre for events/agricultural shows (located central part of County)
- Create development review checklists for both residential and nonresidential development

Threats

- Other industrial parks (like Suffolk)
- Certain development restrictions/regulations – especially to small businesses, rural development
- Health department/County approval process generally

- Low population growth
- Department of Defense budget cuts
- County budget
- Tax base (business closures)-lack of business diversity
- NIMBY-ism
- Need more open-mindedness
- Lack of engagement

October 5, 2012

TO: **Members, Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors**

FROM: **Amy M. Ring, Business Development Manager**

SUBJECT: **SWOT Analysis Results from Board of Supervisor Interviews**

During the month of September, Economic Development staff conducted interviews with individual Board of Supervisor members to gather their views on the future direction of economic development in the County. Each Board member was asked to give their ideas on what they felt as the County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in its economic development program. The Board member interviews coincided with the Economic Development Strategic Plan stakeholder group SWOT exercise held on July 25, 2012.

Staff compiled the results of the Board member interviews in the list below. Staff will utilize the results in the development of the draft Economic Development Strategic Plan.

<u>Strengths</u>

- Location (proximity to ports, proximity to larger metropolitan area)
- Tourism (St. Luke's Church, historic Courthouse)
- Intermodal Park
- Availability of land
- Open space
- Access to transportation
- New Route 460
- Workforce
- Schools
- Strong agricultural industry
- Military presence
- Quiet, rural lifestyle
- Low traffic
- Proximity to diverse cultural events

<u>Weaknesses</u>

- Existing debt
- Lack of involvement of Board of Supervisors in Economic Development
- Intermodal park perceived as a revenue drain rather than producing revenue
- Big educational needs
- Cost of water deal
- Economic Development department/program
- Disconnect between future revenue and funding needs for economic development

- Lack of marketing materials

Opportunities

- New waterline
- Capitalize on spinoff businesses created by strong agricultural industry
- Investigate "value-added' agricultural product business opportunities
- Increase public education on economic development, existing debt, and need for business growth to help diversify the local economy and defray residential tax burden
- Private investment in Intermodal Park
- Ability to offer aging population/retirement community amenities
- Medical industry
- Strengthen marketing materials due to lack of funding for travel
- Skype meetings with site consultants
- Strengthen public perception of County leadership

Threats

- Total Daily Maximum Load (TMDL) regulations
- Cost of new water deal
- Uncertainty of the impacts of growth can be perceived as threat to quality of life
- Big educational needs
- Tax rate
- Fractious Board of Supervisors
- Need for more economic development education for Board of Supervisors
- Improve communication between staff members and the Board of Supervisors
- Negative press from local media on the County
- Public perception of County leadership
- Lack of funding for Economic Development
- Budget concerns

Next Steps:

The next step in the Economic Development Strategic Plan update process will be for County staff to utilize the feedback received during the stakeholder meetings and Board of Supervisor interviews to develop a draft Plan update. The Board, stakeholder group members, and the community at large will be invited to review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan tentatively scheduled for completion this fall.
If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 356-1969 or by email at aring@iwus.net.

Cc: W. Douglas Caskey, County Administrator
Lisa T. Perry, Economic Development Director

Appendix C

Visioning Exercise Results

Isle of Wight County Economic Development Second Strategic Plan Stakeholders Meeting
August 29, 2012

Visioning Exercise Results

The purpose of the second stakeholders meeting was to use the results of the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) exercise conducted at the first stakeholders meeting to develop a vision for the future of economic development as well as goals, objectives and an action plan. The second stakeholders meeting was held on August 29, 2012 from 6:00 PM until 8:00 PM at the Windsor Ruritan Club. There were sixteen stakeholders in attendance as well as five staff members from Economic Development.

The second stakeholders meeting began with introductions by Lisa T. Perry, Director of Economic Development, for Isle of Wight County, followed by a short presentation by Amy Ring, the County's Business Development Manager, to explain the purpose of the meeting as well as the format of the group visioning exercise.

Visioning is the process by which a community imagines the future it wants and plans how to achieve it. A vision is important to the Economic Development Strategic Plan, because it achieves the following:

- seeks to shape the future based on shared community values;
- guides decision making; and
- promotes community buy-in for implementation of the plan.

The stakeholders were asked to form several smaller groups to facilitate interaction among others and were asked to spend fifteen minutes addressing each of the following questions:

4) Identify Shared Values - If we are successful at everything we are trying to accomplish today, what words would you use to describe our community in five years? (What do we want to preserve, create and change in the community?)
5) Create a list of goals that will achieve the values to be contained in the community vision.
6) List objectives with specific action steps to implement goals.

The stakeholders broke into three smaller groups to address each of the questions. The responses to the questions from each group are listed below. At the end of exercise, one member from each group reported their results to the entire group.

The next step in the Economic Development Strategic Plan update process will be for County staff to utilize the feedback received during the stakeholder meetings to develop a draft Plan update. Stakeholders and the community at large will be invited to review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan tentatively scheduled for completion in October 2012.

Isle of Wight County Economic Development Strategic Plan
Second Stakeholders Meeting
Windsor Ruritan Club
August 29, 2012

Visioning Exercise

Utilizing the results from the first stakeholders meeting, meeting participants were asked to develop a list of shared values to be used to capture the community's vision for its Economic Development Strategic Plan (the Plan). Once the group established central values for the Plan, the group was then tasked with developing goals and objectives for the Plan's implementation. The results from the group exercise as well as a list of meeting attendees are listed below.

The next step in the Plan update process will be for County staff to utilize the feedback received during the stakeholder meetings to draft an update to the Plan. Stakeholders and the community at large will be invited to review and comment on the draft Strategic Plan tentatively scheduled for completion in October 2012.

Attendees:

Rick Morris, Delegate
Dennes Carney, Town of Windsor
Ed Easter
Rick Bodson, Isle of Wight Arts League
Judy Winslow, Isle of Wight Tourism Department
Michelle Jones, David Jones Contractors
Richard Rudnicki, Isle of Wight Planning and Zoning Department
Kevin Goerger, Colonial Farm Credit
Henry Morgan, Suffolk Materials
Patty Fleming, Windsor Town Council
William Saunders, Town of Smithfield/Isle of Wight Planning Commission
Rita Richardson, Mayor, Town of Windsor
Diana McFarland, Smithfield Times
Faith Bridges, Food Lion
Randy Betz, Paul D. Camp Community College
Julie Hull, Tidewater Physical Therapy
Beverly Walkup, Isle of Wight Planning and Zoning Department
Lisa Perry, Isle of Wight Economic Development Department
Gloria Spratley, Isle of Wight Economic Development Department
Rachel Chieppa, Isle of Wight Economic Development Department
Kristi Sutphin, Isle of Wight Economic Development Department
Amy Ring, Isle of Wight Economic Development Department

Group Responses:

Question (1) - Identify Shared Values - If we are successful at everything we are trying to accomplish today, what words would you use to describe our community in five years? (What do we want to preserve, create and change in the community?)

We would use these words to describe our community in five years:

- Independent market
- Prosperous
- Business friendly
- Diverse employer base
- A duality of economic centers in the north and south areas of the County that is recognized and managed symbiotically
- Retail development that capitalizes and maximizes existing Development Service Districts
- Self-sufficient
- Wal-Mart
- Opportunities
- Trade school
- Re-imagined education
- Many educational opportunities
- Apprentice program
- Preferred place to live
- Diversified economy/stable industries
- Embracing past/preparing for future
- More community interaction
- Focus on youth – young people's desire to live here
- Diversity in housing options
- Safe
- Good environmental stewardship
- Multiple transportation options
- Vibrant night life/entertainment options
- Embracing history while being cutting edge
- Embracing technology – tie to all we do
- Balance lifestyles throughout the community
- Equitable distribution of County resources
- Attraction of clean industry

We would in the next five years, absolutely keep small town traditions and we would manage growth with a commitment to maintaining small town traditions.

We would create a realistic tax strategy that assesses and addresses the sources and uses of income within the ED strategic plan's SWOT analysis.

In the next five years, we would affect change by:

- Addressing the need to commute out of the County for jobs and shopping
- Addressing the lack of amenities within the County to serve large businesses, e.g., having supporting businesses within the County for the intermodal enterprises
- Working to ensure County schools reach for exceptionalism
- Addressing the perception and correcting the reality that County, School and Town leaderships are not working cooperatively to a common vision
- Correcting with appropriate remedial action the perception that "It's too hard to start a business in Isle of Wight County"
- Preserve rural environment and green space
- Change to a "seeker" friendly environment
- Preserve mindful development
- Culture of customer service in government and business
- Foster environment of common sense
- Preserve Development Service Districts
- Attract employers to keep young people here
- Preserve and advertise what is here
- Create a more pedestrian friendly community
- Keep the community people-friendly
- Create a more welcoming environment to small businesses
- Promote tools that we have to preserve family businesses, ensure succession and ensure longevity

Questions (2) and (3) - Create a list of goals that will achieve the values to be contained in the community vision, and list objectives with specific action steps to implement the goals.

Goal: Becoming a fully realized local economy to serve current residents and draw new residents

Goal**:** Fully realizing throughout the County the agricultural and natural resources as tax and revenue generating resources

Goal: In the north area of the County, becoming a fully realized cultural tourism destination

Goal: In the central and south areas of the County, becoming a fully realized global logistics center

Goal: Becoming a diverse economic center by moving existing infrastructure forward and having missing infrastructure included in funding plans

Objectives:

- Allocate a percentage of the CIP budget to improvements of cultural tourism and resident quality of life (e.g., Parks and Recreation) resources through these quantified steps:
    - Allocation of a percentage of CIP to other items besides public buildings
    - Allocation in CIP to every County department within five years

Goal: Becoming an exemplar of a county with progressive and cooperative leadership

Goal: Develop a local skilled labor force

Objectives:

- Establish an apprenticeship program
- Establish a professional mentoring program
- Identify networking opportunities between local businesses and schools
- Create incentives for businesses to establish workforce development programs
- Promote youth financial literacy
- Promote Paul D. Camp Community College community scholars program

Goal: Establish a series of checklists for County services to foster a seeker-friendly environment

Objectives:

- Create a local business directory profile
- Create online business directory
- Create a space for sharing customer comments (establish a type of "Angie's List")

Goal: Preserve farmland

Objectives:

- Promote zoning to maintain farmland
- Promote and conduct public education on donated conservation easements
- Promote local agriculture

Goal: Develop a citizen education program

Objectives:

- Provide opportunities through social interaction – "retro" (face-to-face) communication
- Educate citizens about the future value of the intermodal park
- Educate the silent majority on the mission through quantified action steps, including:
    - Quarterly communications meetings ("town hall meetings") for information sharing, with 50% of the quarterly communication meetings hosted by community groups or private citizens
    - A "Vision for Isle of Wight" presence at the County Fair within two years
    - Social media deployed with an as-yet defined measurable impact

Goal: Develop target industries

Objectives:

- Focus on clean industries

Goal: Dedicate funding to prepare intermodal park