



Eastern Shore of Virginia

June 2011
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

CEDS

Eastern Shore of Virginia

2011

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

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Executive Summary

This is the final annual update to the 2007 Eastern Shore of Virginia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). In 2012, a completely new document will be developed based on the needs and synergies of the business community and the public sector's role in meeting those needs.

Development of the CEDS is one of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's (A-NPDC) obligations to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) for maintaining that federal agency's designation of the Eastern Shore of Virginia as an Economic Development District eligible for EDA funding. It is a public process that included a public meeting in each county and review by the A-NPDC's Economic Development Committee, which was formed in late 2010 to comply with EDA membership regulations.

EDA has provided millions of dollars to our region over the years: construction of the Accomack Airport Industrial Park, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community College Business Development and Workforce Training Center, and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority's fiber optic backbone are a few of the projects EDA has funded. EDA has expressed a keen interest in development of the Wallops Research Park "outside the gate" at the NASA/Wallops Flight Facility in northern Accomack County, the highest priority project in this plan. As soon as feasible, we expect a grant application will be prepared to request EDA funding for some part of the development at the Wallops Research Park.

The CEDS is a roadmap for achieving economic development goals, and as such, should reflect the plans a region intends to implement in advancing its prosperity. Therefore, an implementation schedule has been added (pp 24-30) to track progress against goals. There are many more projects in the prioritized list than appear in the implementation schedule. The reason for this discrepancy is twofold; the list includes some projects as "placeholders" so that they are not overlooked in future, and the implementation schedule includes those projects and tasks that we believe can be accomplished in the next 12 months.

Questions or comments can be sent to the A-NPDC c/o Barbara Schwenk, P.O. Box 417, Accomac, VA 23301, phone 757-787-2936 x115 or email bschwenk@a-npdc.org.

Developing a Plan

The Research Phase

To conduct the research needed for a new CEDS document, the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission obtained planning funds from the US Economic Development Administration and Accomack and Northampton counties. The resulting report, “Community Economic Development for the Eastern Shore: Summit Report” (www.a-npdc.org/Summit_Report_2007.pdf). The Summit Report provides updated demographics, an inventory and analysis of assets based on people, places, and industries, as well as key findings and implications. In addition, a special follow-up meeting was held in Northampton County in June 2007 to specifically address key concerns around agriculture and aquaculture, tourism, new and existing businesses, education, and water quality.

Public Participation

In February 2007 public meetings were held separately in each county. In Northampton County, an estimated 300 people attended the meeting, and in Accomack County, about 75 people participated. The high attendance in Northampton County was no doubt partly due to a contentious zoning meeting held the previous month. The agenda for both meetings was crafted to include a lot of public participation, and attendees in both counties expressed their views freely.

In June 2007, a follow-up meeting was held in Northampton County to review the draft summit report and to discuss further the key findings. About 40 county residents attended, most of whom reported having attended the previous meeting in February.

On October 28 and 29, 2009, two public meetings were held to update the previous CEDS. This document reflects the results of these meetings, one in Accomack County and one in Northampton County.

In 2011, two public meetings were held in May, one in each county. This update includes the results of those meetings, as well.

A-NPDC Economic Development Committee (51% private business)

Name	Affiliation	Interest
Peter J. Bale, Chairman	Eastern Shore Defense Alliance	Stakeholder
Pamela Barefoot, CEO	Blue Crab Bay Company	Business
Robert S. Bloxom, Sr.	Bloxom Auto Supply	Business
Joe Campbell, Facilities Manager	Perdue Farms	Business
John Chandler, VP Finance	Bayshore Concrete Products Corp.	Business
Tommy Clark	Don's Seafood Restaurant and Tom's Cove Aquafarms	Business
Ralph W. Dodd	Ralph Dodd & Associates	Business
Ava Gabrielle	New Road Community Development	Technical Advisor
Laura Belle Gordy, Supervisor	A-NPDC	Elected Official – Accomack
Charles Kellam	A-NPDC	Citizen Rep – Northampton
Oral Lambert, CEO	Bay Creek Resort & Club	Business
Robert W. Leatherbury, CPA	Leatherbury-Broache & Co., PC	Business
John LeCato, Chairman	Accomac County Economic Development Authority	Stakeholder
Lynwood Lewis, Delegate	Virginia House of Delegates	Elected Official
Patti Lucas, President	Lucas Underground Utilities, Inc.	Business
Andy Mason	Mason-Davis Co., Inc.	Business
Caroline Massey, Management Operations Director	NASA Wallops Flight Facility	Stakeholder
W. Thomas Mears, President and CEO	Shore Bank	Business
Steve Miner, County Administrator	County of Accomack	Technical Advisor
Ralph S. Northam, Senator	Virginia Senate	Elected Official
Katie Nunez, County Administrator	County of Northampton	Technical Advisor
Willie Randall, Supervisor	A-NPDC	Elected Official – Northampton
Bill Ricken, Complex Manager	Tyson Foods, Inc.	Business
Tom Rienarth	A-NPDC	Citizen Rep – Accomack
Genevieve Walker Switzer, President	T&W Block	Business
John Tarr, Mayor	Town of Chincoteague	Elected Official
Linda Thomas-Glover, President	Eastern Shore Community College	Stakeholder

Demographics

See Economic Development Summit Report pp 7 – 8

Socioeconomic Characteristics

See Economic Development Summit Report pp 8-10

Labor Force

See Economic Development Summit Report pp 11-17

Geography & Environment

See Economic Development Summit Report pp 18-26

Climate

Mild Weather

The Eastern Shore of Virginia enjoys a mild climate with four distinct seasons. The Atlantic Ocean has a moderating effect on both summer highs and winter lows.

Snowfall is rare and generally melts in one day. Most of the rainfall occurs in winter and spring months.

The summer months are hot and humid with infrequent thunderstorms. Refreshing maritime breezes generally provide a cool break at day's end. Hurricanes sometimes skirt the region in the fall, but compared to other Atlantic coastal regions, little damage has been done by hurricanes over the last fifty years.

Transportation

See Economic Development Summit Report pp 20-21

Telecommunications

Verizon provides the Eastern Shore of Virginia with all of the latest telecommunications technology. DSL broadband Internet access is available to 80% of our region; however, Verizon reports that they have only a 22% “take rate.” Verizon admits that its physical plant and the database for DSL potential does not match, which might contribute to the low take rate.

There is a perceived need in most communities for higher band-width choices at more affordable rates than is currently available from Verizon. In remote areas, Hughesnet and Wild Blue satellite services are becoming more popular, but they are expensive compared to DSL. In other areas, Charter Cable has promised Internet access, but deployment has been delayed.

Like many other rural regions, the Eastern Shore of Virginia is considered to be underserved with choices for affordable high-speed broadband access.

Water & Wastewater

See Economic Development Summit Report p 21

Location Advantages

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is adjacent to the Hampton Roads metro area across the Chesapeake Bay via the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Tunnel. The region has remained rural with an economy dependent on farming and seafood and has become one of the few places on the East Coast that has preserved its pristine marine environment and shoreline eco-system.

The largest and most direct relationship of the economy of the Eastern Shore of Virginia to that of the greater region is shopping. Residents of the region go to Hampton Roads or Salisbury, Maryland, to make major purchases. Except for a new Walmart in Onley, the population of the Eastern Shore of Virginia has not been large enough to support the large chain stores that now dominate retailing.

The other major relationship is the growing number of people from outside the region purchasing vacation or retirement homes on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. This influx balances the impact of young people leaving the area and helps support local retail and service businesses. The development of a new 2,000 acre residential community in Cape Charles is supporting this trend.

Geographic separation has become an Eastern Shore of Virginia advantage. It is not just retirees who find the region a great place to live. Business owners are also attracted by the quality of life. Small, family-owned businesses have relocated to the region. Recent examples include businesses from Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Northern Virginia, and Hampton Roads.

The Eastern Shore of Virginia may be geographically separate from Hampton Roads, but transportation access has never been a problem. Early in the modern history of the Eastern Shore of Virginia, sailboats and steamships moved passengers and freight between the region and cities across the bay. Towns at the head of the bayside creeks grew and prospered because of this waterborne trade.

The development of a railroad down the center of the peninsula made the ships obsolete and new towns on the railroad grew. In time a highway was built and the railroad diminished in economic importance. Commercial development began to sprawl along the highway. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel opened in the early 1960s and provides a quick way to get to the rest of Virginia.

Industry Clusters

Diversification of the Regional Economy

In past years, seven industry clusters were identified:

Agriculture/food processing

Aerospace

Tourism

Seafood/Aquaculture

Education/Research

Studio Businesses

Retiree Services

Representative of these clusters are the employment figures by sector (p 28 of ED Summit Report):

Manufacturing 29%

Wholesale Trade 2%

Finance & Insurance 3%

Administrative Support & Waste Management 3%

Other Services 4%

Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services 6%

Construction 6%

Forestry, Fishing, & Hunting (less than 1%)

Accommodations & Food Services 11%

Retail Trade 15%

Health Care & Social Assistance 17%

Other 5%

Additional details are presented on pp 27-34 of the ED Summit Report. However, these seven industry clusters remain relevant today.

Partners & Resources for Economic Development

Many Hands Make Light Work

Regional Partners

The Eastern Shore of Virginia is blessed with several organizations working on the many aspects of economic development.

The **Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission**, also the Economic Development District designee, continues to coordinate and facilitate the CEDS process for the region, and focuses on regional planning, housing, and community development issues. Also, in 2009, the A-NPDC established a \$500,000 revolving loan fund for economic development purposes.

In 2010, the A-NPDC created an economic development committee that conforms to the new EDA regulations for a CEDS committee – 51% of the members are private business representatives at the highest organizational level (list on page 2). The Economic Development Committee met in January and June 2011 to conduct business and to develop this CEDS update. Sub-committees move projects forward throughout the year.

The **Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce** is an organization of businesses joined together to maximize its ability to attract and increase the numbers of visitors to Chincoteague Island. The ultimate goal of the organization is to communicate the message that Chincoteague, the “Beautiful Land Across the Water”, is the most desirable location to visit and/or vacation with family or friends.

The **Chincoteague Natural History Association** which has committed to raising the funds to restore the Assateague Island Lighthouse.

The **County of Accomack** is the leader in the Wallops Research Park project. It hired a project manager in 2007. A progress report is part of this document.

The **County of Northampton** completed its new Comprehensive Plan in 2009. It includes many of the recommendations that came out of the 2007 CEDS process. In addition, it focuses on its natural assets and the huge agriculture, seafood, and aquaculture sectors.

The **Eastern Shore Community College** provides workforce training and business development services in our region. Upon completion of its new facility in 2009, it expanded its curriculum in response to area business training needs.

The **Eastern Shore Defense Alliance** focuses on issues related to the federal BRAC closings and the needs of the Wallops Island Department of Defense and partner organizations and facilities relative to land-use policy and perceived threats due to encroachment.

The **Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority** was formed by the two counties in 2008 to build, expand, and maintain a high-speed fiber optic network for the entire region. Federal and state funds have been obtained for construction of the fiber-optic backbone which will connect NASA/Wallops in the north to the Tidewater region of Virginia, providing broadband redundancy for all federal agencies located in our region, and bringing affordable high-speed Internet access to our communities.

The **Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber of Commerce** is a member-driven and –directed organization that represents the business, professional, agricultural, seafood, tourism, and community interests that advance economic and civic well-being through private-sector enterprise with a foundation built on providing value for its members' investment.

The **Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission** now receives regular funding via a transient occupancy tax from Northampton County and funding from Accomack County which has allowed it to hire additional staff. It has been busy with strategy development, tourism research, and branding of the Shore as a destination. By partnering with Northampton County and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel District Commission, it established a visitor center in the expanded rest facility at the northern terminus of the bridge tunnel. It has also helped to organize artist's studio tours and has held high-visibility events to attract more visitors.

The **Northampton County Chamber of Commerce** promotes and develops the prosperity of the community as the primary advocate and resource for its businesses.

The **Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads** has provided a part-time business analyst for the use of small businesses and entrepreneurs for many years. Assistance in developing business plans and financing packages has been especially important to start-up small businesses in our region.

The **Virginia Eastern Shore Economic Empowerment and Housing Corporation** operates a microenterprise revolving loan fund along with other community development programs including housing and debt consolidation loans.

The Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority is a creation of the Commonwealth of Virginia, but its focus is on the **Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport** at Wallops Island (www.marsspaceport.com). The

Spaceport has been and will be the scene of commercial rocket launches and will benefit the regional economy with spin-off manufacturing businesses.

Federal & State Resources

The **US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration** has provided generous financial support to the creation of business parks, the commercial spaceport at Wallops Island, the Eastern Shore Community College Business Development and Workforce Center, and economic development planning in the region for many years.

US Department of Agriculture Rural Development is very active in providing funding for wastewater treatment, revolving loan funds and a variety of other economic development programs in the region.

The **US Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Services** which is working closely with localities to develop the Northampton Bicycle Trail and is collaborating with the Chincoteague Natural History Association to restore the Assateague Island Lighthouse.

The **Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development** has provided business financing, downtown revitalization, and business park development assistance to our region.

The **Virginia Department of Transportation** has provided much-needed funding over many years through the Transportation Enhancement Program for myriad projects involving museums, downtown revitalization, and community trails.

The **Virginia Employment Commission** supports our community in various ways, including tracking of availability of job opportunities to low- and middle-income residents to comply with Community Development Block Grant program goals, developing and updating economic and labor market data for Community Profiles, and conducting training with its partners.

The **Virginia Foundation for the Humanities** has provided grants and staff assistance for tourism-related projects on the Eastern Shore.

Vision

The Future of the Eastern Shore of Virginia

An excellent vision statement for the future of the Eastern Shore of Virginia was developed in an earlier planning process for the Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Partnership. It was developed with the input of the entire Partnership, representing a cross-section of the community. Public hearings were held for input from the general public and the vision was approved by the localities. We have adopted that vision statement as our own.

A Vision for the Eastern Shore of Virginia: Where We Are in 2020

In 2020, the Eastern Shore of Virginia is a rural community, with thriving towns and villages and lots of open space, parks and trails. Our Eastern Shore is a prosperous region where all residents share in our economic well-being. We are proud of the abundance of safe, affordable housing throughout our region.

Our industrial parks attract industries which do not deplete our natural resource base or pollute our air or water. We have a sustainable, diversified economy, and infrastructure which allows for an abundance of small and medium sized businesses, providing meaningful jobs with good wages and benefits. We provide job training opportunities for adults and young people, enabling them to stay and have careers in our region.

The natural, cultural and historical beauty of our region is unique. We are a haven for artists. Our region is also a great place to retire; we have top notch retirement communities with new residential development and excellent health care facilities.

Tourism is a significant industry here. Tourists are attracted to our region because of our clean environment, open spaces and natural resources. Nature-based tourism is prevalent; learning tours are a big attraction. We have other attractions which draw tourists to our region: spaceport, museums, aquariums, and a convention center.

We are fortunate to have NASA and other federal agencies and the space port located in our region. We are world leaders in developing commercial space launch technology and other aerospace support activities. We have a renowned aerospace/marine resources learning center which attracts students from all over the United States.

Our natural resource base is well managed: we have prosperous agriculture and aquaculture industries. We provide an excellent educational base in aquaculture and agriculture, so that future generations may utilize these resources wisely and effectively.

Goals

Landmarks on the Road to Prosperity

Taking information from previous plans, the new ED Summit Report, economic development organizations, and public comments, we began to and continue to develop strategies for the plan.

It became apparent that certain issues were surfacing over and over again. These common concerns became the basis for the strategic goals. The goals are fundamental to the plan, for while this report offers specific strategies for implementation, the lists is not necessary exhaustive. Sound goals provide a strong framework for future expansion of the lists of strategies.

Strategic Goals:

- *Create a positive environment for the growth of our seven industry clusters by providing the necessary public infrastructure (business parks, utilities, incubators) and by enhancing capital availability (revolving loan funds).*
- *Offer opportunities for lifelong learning and skill development related to our seven industry clusters, serving potential employees and entrepreneurs.*
- *Develop a regional identity that celebrates our competitive advantages and connects the communities of our region.*
- *Attract or grow businesses that provide living-wage jobs and don't harm the environment.*
- *Recognize the importance of our historic towns and villages to the overall economic health of the region and develop strategies to stimulate their revitalization.*

Economic Development Strategies

PEOPLE:

“The region must actively plan for and pursue opportunities to fully leverage the region’s existing and potential sources of human capital.”

- Recognize school quality as a prerequisite for successful community economic development and make school quality a priority in any agenda.
- Consider models for marketing programs matching workers who’ve left the Eastern Shore with current and potential employers.
- *Provide opportunities for high school students to focus on in-demand technical skills.*
- *Look for innovative outlets to engage the energy of the Eastern Shore’s growing community of retirees.*

PLACES:

“The region should carefully study market opportunities and constraints facing ideas to develop the region’s natural assets.”

- Undertake careful analysis of markets and organizing strategies for entering new and exciting markets for agriculture and aquaculture.
- Explore and implement appropriate best practices in e-commerce and new “niche” tourism marketing strategies.

INFRASTRUCTURE:

“Recognize the quality of infrastructure as important to both community and business/industry and act on it.”

- Support community clean-up programs and other efforts to improve the quality of the physical environment.
- Carefully examine capital investments in infrastructure, such as water and sewer, and recreational facilities, with recognition of their significance for community economic development.
- Recognize addressing the problems of substandard housing will be beneficial for community economic development.
- Promote expansion of commercial-speed broadband infrastructure options.

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY:

“Carefully study the commitments required to realize the potential for research and development activity in the region.”

- Encourage state support for activity at Wallops Island, including the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS).
- Pursue development strategies in aerospace/spaceflight and marine sciences, and conduct thorough research into the competitive picture in these areas.
- Recognize the distinction between the immediate economic impact of research and the long term commitment required to see the benefits of commercial development.

Prioritized List of Projects

1. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION

A. Wallops Research Park

- i. In 2010, Accomack County resolved to fund infrastructure identified in the master plan: taxiway from the Wallops landing strip to the WRP, new road, water and wastewater, and broadband. Funding for the taxiway is still being sought.
- ii. Construction has been delayed by a downturn in the anchor tenant's prospects.
- iii. A point of presence for the Eastern Shore Community College Workforce Development program in the park.
- iv. In early 2011, the Accomack County Board of Supervisors requested a report from the WRP Leadership Council (a service district authority under Virginia code) on the anchor tenant's prospects and a plan for moving forward with at least partial infrastructure improvements. The report is expected in September 2011.

B. Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport

- i. In 2011, Accomack County received \$3.5 million from the VDOT Transportation Opportunity Fund to remove overhead utilities and place them underground along Atlantic Road to support moving Orbital Sciences' modules from the NASA Payload Processing Center to the launch site on Wallops Island. In 2008, Orbital Sciences won a \$1.9 billion contract from NASA to fly eight re-supply missions to the International Space Station between 2012 and 2021. Each delivery would involve up to 20 tons of supplies.
- ii. In all, \$106 million dollars have secured to build out the launch pads, the Horizontal Interface Facility, and operations centers for this effort.
- iii. In addition, more than 700 contract personnel have been involved in the construction of the Horizontal Interface Facility and launch pads over the past year.

C. Accomack Airport and Industrial Park

- i. Objectives for the AAIP include:
 1. Developing a marketing strategy.

2. Development of building sites in the AAIP with cleared land, roads, and utilities.
3. Ensure that there is always a flex space building available.
4. To promote tourism by looking for opportunities to provide transportation and other services for people who fly in to the Airport. Also, we should promote the Airport as a tourist destination.

D. Internet portal

- i. Creation of a new website or “portal” for the Eastern Shore to ensure a regional web presence; find funding to maintain it as a top-flight product that reflects well on our region. The former Eastern Shore of Virginia Portal was not supported by the A-NPDC Commissioners, as it was corrupted, was not updated regularly, and needed so much upgrading that it wasn’t viewed as viable. However, the domain name of the former Economic Development Commission has been retained and could be used again (www.easternshore.org).
- ii. Set up a regional point of contact and have that information passed onto the Virginia Economic Development Partnership.

E. Improve infrastructure

- i. Harbors
 1. Deepen Cape Charles federal harbor and natural channel – Bayshore Concrete Products Corp., the Town of Cape Charles, and Northampton County funded an economic impact study that documented benefit of millions of revenue dollars for our region and the state by deepening the federally-designated Cape Charles Harbor and natural channel from 14 to 40 feet. Dredging would enable Bayshore Concrete Products to pursue lucrative contracts for very large and heavy concrete construction modules for various projects that could be floated out of the harbor. If the company won those contracts, it would then hire an additional 250 workers.
- ii. Energy
 1. Electricity – improving quality
 2. Continue to put zoning in place that provides for commercial solar- and wind-powered electricity generation.

3. Plan for the eventual need to increase distribution line capacity in order to send locally generated electricity to the grid.
 4. Explore the feasibility of extending a natural gas pipeline from Maryland to the Eastern Shore of Virginia.
- iii. Broadband – expand utilization of broadband infrastructure
1. Marketing initiative
 2. Find funding to build out from backbone to premises
 3. Solicit proposals and partnership from private sector for additional services
- iv. Railroad - Upgrade railroad infrastructure
1. In the most recent Department of Rail and Public Transportation Virginia statewide draft six-year Rail Plan, there are \$1.1 million included for proposed improvements to the Eastern Shore rail system.
- v. Wastewater
1. Both counties are seeking funding to build wastewater collection and treatment systems for specific areas of need.
 2. The Town of Chincoteague has completed preliminary engineering studies for a wastewater collection system that would support existing businesses and municipal facilities along its major corridor. This would connect to a North Accomack County regional treatment facility if approved.
 3. Accomack County is also negotiating with the Town of Onancock to buy excess capacity from its treatment plant for use in the four corners area of Onley, Onancock, Melfa, and Tasley.

F. Aquaculture

- i. The feasibility and impact of opening seaside public Baylor Grounds to commercial oyster production is being studied.
- ii. Study how to remove, compost, and resell algae from aquaculture cages/baskets.

G. Revolving Loan Fund

- i. The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission manages a \$500,000 revolving loan fund for economic development purposes. Its most recent loan was \$300,000 to Bay Coast Railroad for repairs to the 25 railcar barge float that crosses the 26-mile wide Chesapeake Bay from Little Creek in Norfolk to Cape Charles. This loan was made to match a \$700,000 gift from the Commonwealth for the \$1 million repair bill. The repairs were made in 2010, and it was back in operation in November.

Bay Coast Railroad's route from Pocomoke City, Maryland south is still the most direct route between the Northeast and Hampton Roads and one of the few that can accommodate over-height shipments, which is due in part to its unique floating operations. This railcar float is one of only two in the eastern United States, and except for maintenance periods, this particular floating operation has been in continuous service since April 1885.

2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

A. Mentoring/recognition programs – increase goals and outreach

- i. Project Horizon – Community College Foundation Board's Scholarship Mentoring Program
 1. Supports middle and high school at-risk students (grades 7-12). All will be first in their family to attend post-secondary education.
 2. Provides tutoring, mentoring, counseling and academic incentives, as well as various "life skill" workshops, and field trips to colleges and cultural events.
 3. If PH students choose to come to ESCC after graduation, the Foundation pays their tuition while they attend.
 4. Currently 85 students in program
 5. A major challenge to the program is securing sufficient tutors in math and science.
- ii. Kappa Alpha Phi – fraternity that targets African-American middle-school males
- iii. Cape Charles Rotary Club recognition projects that target grade school children

- B. GED – Eastern Shore Community College, along with the cooperation of Accomack and Northampton County School systems, is the provider of Adult Basic Education/GED/English Language instruction for the past 35 years.**

Tuition and managed enrollment have resulted in a stable class size and improved retention. Annually, ESCC serves approximately 400 students. Each year ESCC awards more GEDs than the largest high school on the Shore awards diplomas, and it has exceeded its targets in 2009-2010 as set by the federal government.

However, the program is in danger of ending or being down-sized due to the fact that it is funded by grants only. Also, some of the grant programs used in the past no longer exist or are being reduced.

A reliable source of funds would benefit the program and might enable even more recruitment, outreach, and testing.

- C. Culinary Arts Training – a collaboration between Northampton County and the Eastern Shore Community College to upgrade the Northampton Middle School cafeteria to serve as a classroom.**

3. TOURISM

A. Tall ship initiatives

- i. *Kalmar Nyckel* (Delaware's official tall ship) to Cape Charles 2011+
- ii. Elizabethan Fair to coincide with *Kalmar Nyckel* visits
- iii. Participation with City of Norfolk's section of the OpSail 2012 (bicentennial of the War of 1812) celebration.
- iv. Tourism infrastructure grant program – this program is funded with a percentage of a transient occupancy tax. In the first year the program was instituted, there was \$36,000 available. In 2009, nearly \$54,000 was awarded under the program.

B. Excursion trains

- i. Bay Coast Railway operates excursion dinner trains on Fridays and Saturdays from Cape Charles to Eastville.

C. Trails

- i. Heritage
- ii. Seaside Water
- iii. Bicycle

D. Virginia Spaceflight Academy

E. Tangier Island

- i. Tangier is losing ground, literally, about 9 acres a year. It needs a seawall to help slow down the erosion and loss of land. The town circulated a petition with over 360 signatures and has sent it to elected officials, asking them to support construction of a seawall to preserve Tangier Island

F. Chincoteague Island

- i. Complete research necessary to support a US Fish & Wildlife Services Baseline Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of Wildlife Refuge/Seashore visitation on the tourism-based economy of the Town.
- ii. Encourage a plan for recreational beach nourishment/management at Assateague Island National Seashore/Tom's Cove with convenient visitor parking for 1,000 cars.
- iii. Prepare feasibility and funding program for expansion of the Chincoteague Museum
- iv. Continue efforts to extend and improve the bicycle trail connecting Accomack County and the Wildlife Refuge.
- v. Revitalization of the downtown Main Street, including movie theatre and Landmark Plaza shopping center.

G. Tourism Marketing Initiative

- i. Northampton County has prepared a grant application to the Virginia Tourism Corp to begin an intensive tourism marketing campaign for the lower Eastern Shore "Cross the Bay for a Day, Better Yet Decide to Stay." It is a targeted media outreach and awareness campaign focused on the Hampton Roads region, and more specifically on the Virginia Beach area and the military market to promote the region. The program is a partnership of two governmental agencies, the

local chamber of commerce, one non-profit and three business entities as well as cooperation with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission.

H. Spacecoast Tourism Steering Committee

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A. Housing Development

- i. Northampton County has \$1,025,270 at its disposal for the Culls Housing Project consisting of:
 1. Rehabilitation of 15 houses
 2. Substantial reconstruction of three houses
 3. Installation of first-time indoor plumbing in one house
 4. Installation of four new septic systems and five new deep wells
 5. Demolition of eight uninhabitable houses
 6. Reconstruction/re-shaping of 12, 300 linear feet of roadside ditches
 7. Reconstruction/re-shaping of 2,300 linear feet of offsite drainage ditches
 8. Installation of 240 linear feet of new cross culvert pipe under existing roadway
 9. Installation of 300 linear feet of new driveway culvert pipe.

B. Leadership Development Initiative

- i. Find a way to actively engage local leaders and businesses in regional economic development efforts.

C. Libraries

- i. Look for ways to get access to high-speed broadband to the regional libraries and for new equipment that can utilize this service.

D. Accomack County to hire economic/community development professional in 2011

E. Recreational facilities

- i. Northampton County Aquatic Center

- ii. Replacement land for parcel to be added to Wallops Research Park.
- iii. Renovation of the old gymnasium in Chincoteague for indoor recreation.

F. Medical Center on Tangier Island was dedicated in August 2010.

G. Hospital move

- i. Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital has been given the green light from the state to move from Nassawadox to Onancock. Northampton County Supervisors would like to see an urgent care facility left in Northampton County.
- ii. The loss of revenue for Northampton County and the benefits of the move for Accomack County will continue to unfold. In particular, the adverse effect on Northampton County will require planning to replace lost revenue.

H. Main Street Program

- i. Coordinate staffing of a Main Street program coordinator position to encourage the revitalization of community business districts in towns and villages.

5. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

- A. Explore synergies between R&D entities in the region such as the Marine Sciences Consortium, College of William and Mary Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, University of Virginia Long-Term Ecological Research Project, Old Dominion University, NASA, Navy, NOAA, Coast Guard, and Department of Defense contractors.**

Comments from Public Meetings

These are general comments received during public meetings in 2009 and 2011.

1. Education: Focus on improving school offerings in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Pursue the mentoring idea using retirees or other volunteers. Children who don't get support from their families need to be encouraged and inspired to learn. Look for synergies between STEM and the Virginia Spaceflight Academy curriculum. Look for ways to provide secure funding for the GED program, and continue to provide services for workforce development.
2. Research & Development: A disconnect is perceived between water research and education on the Eastern Shore. There must be some synergism or economies of scale or mutual benefit to be gained by combining efforts between the University of Virginia's LTER facility in Oyster, William and Mary's VIMS facility in Wachapreague, the Anheuser-Busch Center in Oyster, and the Marine Science Consortium at the Wallops Research Park location. Synergies or applications between marine sciences, global positioning systems, weather data collection/mining, and Department of Defense, NOAA, NASA, contractors seems to hold potential.
3. Business Development, Retention & Expansion: Pursue the agriculture cluster idea with the Eastern Shore Farmers/Seafood Markets. Explore interest and funding sources. Maintaining the railroad and barge float as a priority. Attract alternative energy companies (wind/solar). Dredge channels that are silting in (Cape Charles, Onancock [already started], small village boating facilities on bay and oceanfront). Repair breakwaters that protect harbors (Cape Charles).
4. Infrastructure: Explore feasibility of constructing a service road as previously planned between the Farmers/Seafood Market, the Eastern Shore Community College, and the Accomack Airport Industrial Park to ease truck traffic on Route 13, especially at the Melfa intersection. Conduct a needs assessment for a Public Service Authority. Pursue wastewater infrastructure for Exmore (need more capacity and additional investment in current system) and Nassawadox, and possibility of extending a natural gas line from Pocomoke City, Maryland to the Eastern Shore of Virginia.
5. Tourism: Space tourism (how to benefit from it when it comes); gateways (northern Accomack County in particular – make a video of the approach from the Maryland state line south); expand parks and trails, especially the bicycle trail from Chincoteague Island to the mainland along the causeway; develop Onley/Onancock bike trail; develop an Artisan's Trail, such as the one in southwest Virginia (Round the Mountain). Promote the charter fishing industry, birding and marine mammal activities. Support and promote railroad museums, historic house restorations,

non-profits such as Cape Charles Historical Society, ES Historical Society (Ker Place), Barrier Islands Center, etc.

6. Community Development: Support and promote non-profits such as Eastern Shore's Own Art Center (Belle Haven), ArtsEnter (Cape Charles), YMCA, 4-H programs, etc. Continue to search for a solution to the problem of inadequate and affordable housing in our region.

Project/Task	Responsibility	Support	Timeline	Date Completed
1. BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, RETENTION, AND EXPANSION				
A. Wallops Research Park Development				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommendations on how to proceed with infrastructure buildout 2. Secure funding for recommendations 	WRP Leadership Council Accomack County	A-NPDC A-NPDC	September 2011 FY2012 Budget	
B. Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Secure funding of \$3.5 million to move overhead utilities underground to facilitate moving large modules along Atlantic Road from the NASA Payload Processing Center to Wallops Island. 2. Work with Orbital Sciences to complete scheduled launches on time and within budget to re-supply the International Space Station. 	Accomack County Virginia Spaceflight Authority	NASA NASA	2010 Ongoing until 2016	2011
C. Accomack Airport and Industrial Park				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult Tourism Commission about how to promote the airport as a tourism destination 2. Hire commercial realtor to promote sales in the Park 	A-NPDC AC Economic Development	ESVA Tourism Commission Accomack County	2011 ongoing	

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	Authority			
D. Internet Portal				
i. Explore options and examples of similar portals, and then develop a strategy to address it.	A-NPDC	Counties	FY2012	
ii. Establish a regional point of contact for Virginia Economic Development Partnership	Counties	A-NPDC	2011-2012	
E. Improve Infrastructure				
i. Harbors – Deepen Cape Charles Harbor and Natural Channel				
1. Conduct Economic Impact study using Old Dominion University	Bayshore Concrete Products Corp. Town of Cape Charles Northampton County	A-NPDC	April 2011	May 2011
2. Request \$100,000 Congressional appropriation for US Army Corps of Engineers engineering study	Same as #1	Senators Webb and Warner	2011	2012
3. Request construction authorization and funding one year later	Same as #1	US Army Corps of Engineers, Senators	2013	

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<p>ii. Energy</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stated need for cleaner, higher quality electrical power – explore needs and costs of improvement 2. Complete zoning changes necessary for commercial production of electricity by solar or wind 3. Explore feasibility of extending a natural gas pipeline from Pocomoke City Maryland to Eastern Shore of Virginia by collecting volumes (oil and propane) from biggest energy users and arrange a visit and tour from Chesapeake Utilities. 4. Plan for eventual need to increase distribution line capacity to the grid as locally-generated power increases <p>iii. Broadband</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop marketing initiative that also solicits proposals from the private sector for additional services and partnerships. 2. Find funding to build out from backbone to premises <p>iv. Railroad</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin making improvements over the next six years – includes cross ties, surfacing, lining, and ballasting the 	<p>A-NPDC County Planning Commissions A-NPDC Counties</p>	<p>Counties A-NPDC Counties Counties Counties</p>	<p>FY2012 2011-2012 July 2011 Long term 2011 2011 FY2013 (July 1, 2012)</p>	

Project/Task	Responsibility	Support	Timeline	Date Completed
track v. Wastewater 1. Seek funding to construct engineered systems in Cape Charles/Cheriton and Exmore/Nassawadox/Willis Wharf 2. Seek funding for engineered systems in Chincoteague/Atlantic/area	Northampton County Accomack County	A-NPDC A-NPDC	2011-2012 2011-2012	
vi. Aquaculture 1. Baylor Grounds study results complete	Virginia General Assembly		2011	
2. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT				
A. Mentoring/Recognition Programs 1. Address challenge of finding sufficient tutors in math and sciences. B. GED Training 1. Explore sources for secure funding as well as grant programs to ensure the program continues in future.	ESCC ESCC	A-NPDC	2011-12 2011	

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<p>C. Culinary Arts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finalize agreement between Northampton County and Eastern Shore Community College 2. Begin offering Culinary Arts program at Northampton Middle School 	<p>Northampton County/ESCC ESCC</p>	<p>School Board Northampton County</p>	<p>Summer 2011 Spring 2012</p>	
<p>3. TOURISM</p> <p>A. Tall Ships Initiatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Organize and advertise <i>Kalmar Nyckel</i> initial visit – June 2-7, 2011 ii. Prepare for Elizabethan Fair to coincide with above – professional re-enactment troupe from Raleigh NC iii. Expand tall ships initiative by participating with the City of Norfolk in OpSail2012 June 6, 2012. iv. Continue to use Tourism Infrastructure grants to fund appropriate projects <p>B. Trails</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Eastern Shore Bicycle Plan – updated in 2011 – present to 	<p>Volunteers Same Same Northampton County</p>	<p>Northampton County Chamber of Commerce And Virginia Tourism Corp. Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission</p>	<p>May 2011 May 2011 2011-2012 2011-2012</p>	<p>June 2011 June 2011</p>

Project/Task	Responsibility	Support	Timeline	Date Completed
<p>counties and towns for adoption.</p> <p>C. Northampton County Marketing Initiative – “Cross the Bay for a Day, Better Yet Decide to Stay”</p>	<p>Northampton County ES Tourism Comm. Three business entities</p>	<p>VA Tourism Corp.</p>	<p>(July 2011 – June 30 2012)</p> <p>2012</p>	
4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT				
<p>A. Culls Housing Rehabilitation</p> <p>i. Construction contract awarded</p> <p>ii. 15 houses rehabilitated – in groups of five</p> <p>iii. Easements obtained for stormwater outfalls</p> <p>iv. Construction management for all elements</p> <p>B. Need perceived for a community leadership initiative but not by a political organization.</p> <p>i. Research program offerings by non-political groups</p>	<p>A-NPDC</p> <p>A-NPDC</p> <p>A-NPDC</p> <p>A-NPDC</p> <p>A-NPDC</p>	<p>Northampton County</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>“</p> <p>Community College</p>	<p>July 2011</p> <p>2011-2013</p> <p>2011</p> <p>2011-2013</p> <p>FY2012</p>	
5. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT				
<p>A. Begin investigation/conversations with stakeholders (UVA, Virginia</p>	<p>A-NPDC</p>	<p>Stakeholders</p>	<p>Spring</p>	

Project/Task	Responsibility	Support	Timeline	Date Completed
Tech, Old Dominion University, Marine Science Consortium, William and Mary, etc) to identify possible synergies and develop a strategy for R&D based on natural resources, farming, and aquaculture.			2012	

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