



Bridges of Hope: Strengthening the Economy of Northampton County

Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Presented to the

Northampton County Board of Supervisors

February 12, 2013



Board of Supervisors of Northampton County
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The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee appointed by the Supervisors in 2011 believes that an Economic Crisis is looming in Northampton County. One stark fact that arose from our research drives this conclusion: The US Department of Agriculture has identified Northampton as one of only two counties in Virginia which are places of “*Persistent Poverty*”. This is a categorical status of predictable economic failure by our county. It is evidence of our crisis, and proof of the failure of the economic plans and policies we now have in place. It mandates that we take action.

“The Chinese use two characters to write the word 'crisis.' One character stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger - but recognize the opportunity.”

John F. Kennedy, April 12, 1959

Our demographics tell the story: our total population is in decline along with our school enrollment, and our largest segment is dominated by older groups. Most of our young people leave us in search of prosperity elsewhere. Almost one third of our children live in poverty. We must provide new and better economic opportunities for our citizens or suffer the inevitable negative social consequences of greater disenfranchisement and hopelessness. We simply cannot allow 31.5% of the children of Northampton to live in poverty and not take action. As a civilized modern society, we must not; we cannot allow this poverty to continue unchecked. ***It is an urgent matter of the highest order.*** It starts by immediately addressing the long overdue and urgent need for new economic activity within the County.

The danger we face comes if we do not recognize the urgency of these economic realities and the immediate need for new economic opportunities for our people, and new sources of revenue to fund the County budget. If we fail to find new sources of revenue, we will inevitably be required to raise the tax burden on our residents who already struggle financially. We are surrounded by opportunities for new economic activity. They require bold leadership, compassion for our least fortunate, and a vision for a prosperous future where economic sustainability and environmental stewardship have equal footing.

Our population is declining. The need for economic critical mass is real across the entire Northampton County financial spectrum. It is a fact that the tax burden must be spread out over a larger and better employed population than our current demographic projections indicate, or our community will continue to suffer. Poverty appears to be a litmus test of our economic health. If we improve our economy, we will reduce poverty overall. With the Commonwealth seeking to push more costs down to the counties, such as in the devolution of VDOT services to localities and shifts in School funding, a strong and healthy local economic tax base has never been more important. That Northampton County must increase and diversify its economic base is an established fact, as are the numerous opportunities for doing so.

It is acknowledged that we must protect our environment and natural resources, but the need to enhance the human condition of our citizens with opportunities for a better life must be held as equally important. It is urgent that we find a balance between these competing priorities. We believe that it can be done, and that this report will lead us in the right direction.

This report acknowledges the crises we face, and some of the opportunities that must be acted on to begin the creation of a positive economic growth in the county. We simply do not have the luxury of affording idealistic concepts for preserving the ways of the past. We cannot afford to rely on the academic theories and questions that govern The Economic Development section of our Comprehensive Plan any longer. We must create practical new sources of revenue for the county, while building bridges of hope to a better economic future for our citizens in the process.



William C. Parr
Chairman
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
January 31, 2013

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The Northampton County Board of Supervisors commissioned the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC), an ad-hoc committee intended to advise the Board. The CPAC first met in August 2011. The CPAC was charged with the following:

1. Review the commercial and industrial zoning districts on the maps and analyze commercial land use aspects of the ordinances.
2. Create an Economic Development Plan (Sec 3.5.5 of the County's Comprehensive Plan)
3. Serve in a review capacity for the entire Comprehensive Plan.

Through the course of a fourteen month effort, the CPAC members conducted extensive information gathering. This included meetings with leadership of various state agencies, private sector developers, engineers, surveyors, and others who have relevant expertise in the area of economic development.

Current Economic State of Northampton County

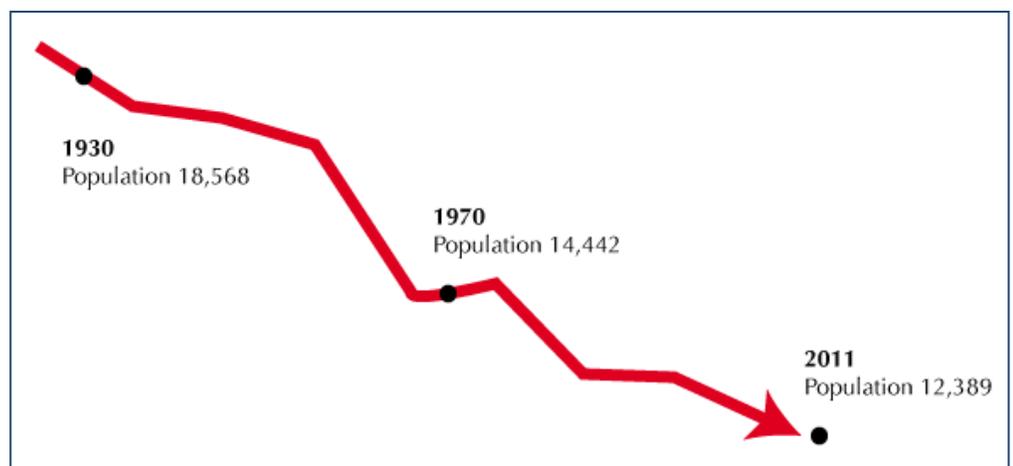
Fewer People Means Less Revenue

Northampton County is losing its people. Loss of population means not only are new people not moving to the area, but the indigenous population is also leaving whenever possible. The 2006 Northampton County Comprehensive Plan was created under the assumption of growth in population, vehicular traffic, and residential areas. This growth never materialized, and the current economic plan impedes the growth potential of a severely stagnant economy.

According to the *2010-11 Northampton County Annual Operating Budget and Report*, a demographic analysis conducted by the

University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service projected the Northampton County population to be 13,990 by 2010 and 14,932 by 2020. However, according to the 2010 census the population dropped to 12,377 and is projected to decrease even further to 12,289 according to 2011 estimates.

Projections of more recent trend analysis suggest the county population will drop below 12,000 in the next twenty years.



Consequently, the current decline in Northampton County's population has an adverse effect on the local economy. The reduction in population makes it difficult for the County to achieve self-sustaining economic viability, a term known as critical mass.

As population declines the commerce that supports the tax base, and creates revenue for the county budget declines. A county needs an adequate critical mass in its population to produce adequate revenue.

Ill-Prepared Workforce

Even if living wage jobs come, a disproportionate number of our citizens are not qualified to take advantage of the opportunities. Much of the county's population, especially those in the younger demographic, are not receiving an education that prepares them for current-day employment opportunities, nor do they possess the life skills that are necessary for success in the workforce.

Young people tend to leave the region to find employment while retirees remain.

Northampton County can address this problem by performing an analysis of its secondary and higher education system.

The analysis will determine the most effective strategy for preparing its young citizens to become a productive labor force.

While the community college does have an active internship program with NASA Wallops, and a job at NASA would pay a livable wage, it is unlikely a person would be hired if they only completed higher education at Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) as the degrees offered there do not prepare people for work at NASA.

Some certification/technical programs that once were available at the ESCC, such as auto mechanics, have closed down.

2011 Community Needs Assessment conducted by the Planning Council for the Eastern Shore Community Services Board.

“Expenses are not out of control. The county is efficiently run. Northampton County has a *revenue problem*, not an *expense problem*.”

Spencer Murray, Former Member Northampton County Board of Supervisors

No Middle Ground for Divergent Citizenry

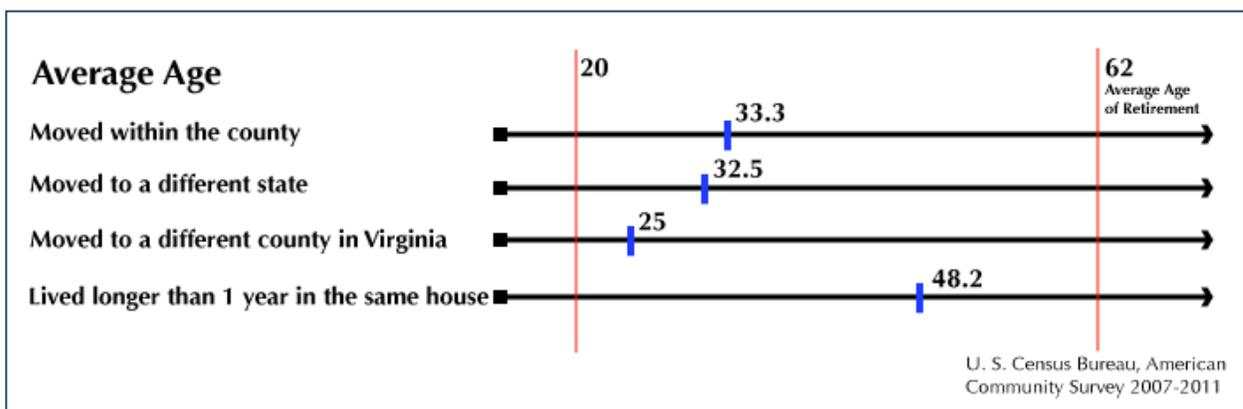
Northampton County's greatest population assets are its seniors and its youth, but neither segment is effectively maximized. There is an increasing disparity between two population groups in Northampton County. One party is the aging and retiring residents, which makes up a high percentage of the total population. The second, the smaller percentage, is the younger residents, which is facing a crisis of economic opportunity. Since the necessity to seize this opportunity in the county's human capital is of vital importance to the county's economic health, the CPAC determined to pursue a strategy that opts to recognize this fact not as a challenge, but as a point of engagement. This requires the exploration of possibilities for labor and market potential that forges ties between those who possess a wealth of expertise, and those who are in dire need of experience. It further requires that we recognize that our community needs its youth to be a vital part of our county's economic future.

Cultural and Economic Disconnect Between Citizens

Northampton County citizens are still an extremely segregated population, no longer only by race, but by also by socioeconomic level. The implementation of a successful comprehensive economic development initiative will involve connecting the divergent populations of age, race, and socioeconomic background to the following:

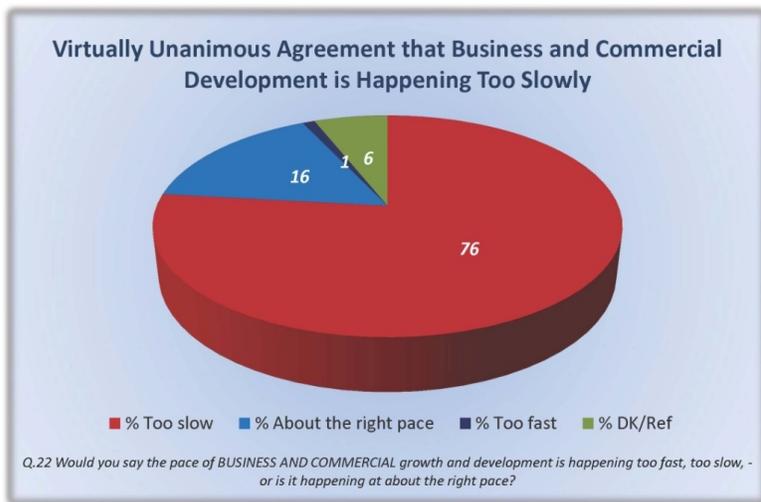
- **To one another**
- **To the institutions of secondary and higher education**
- **To the job opportunities that will come to the Eastern Shore and elsewhere**
- **To the processes of creating economic prosperity on the Eastern Shore**

Economic development is about building physical infrastructure, recruitment, and development of infrastructure. In Northampton County it also requires the construction of resources for people to gain access to these very necessary opportunities.



Dissatisfied Citizens

In early 2012 the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee received a grant from the National Association of Realtors for an independent polling of Northampton County residents. The CPAC engaged the services of American Strategies polling services of Washington DC together with Myers Research and Strategic services to conduct the survey and analyze its results. The CPAC



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invested hundreds of hours in the development of a questionnaire designed to determine how our residents feel about the economic status of the County. The survey reached a random sample of 350 adult residents, 18 years or older. The survey was conducted by independent pollsters, July 9-15, 2012. The margin of error associated with these data at a 95 percent confidence level is +/- 5.2 percent. This is one of the largest polls taken of our citizens in the past 25 years.

The entire survey, including all of the questions asked, and all of the results are now posted on the County's website. A summary of the findings are attached as an appendix to this report. We believe that this survey is completely objective, independent of any influence outside of the CPAC members.

"A majority of polled citizens are unequivocally dissatisfied with the current course of the County."

According to the survey:

- **56% of Northampton County residents believe that the county is on the "wrong track."**
- **56% consider jobs and economic growth to be the most significant issue that the county faces.**
- **76% say the pace of business and commercial growth and development is happening too slowly.**
- **61% of citizens believe Northampton County needs more than tourism and agriculture to boost the economy.**

Slightly over one-third of citizens believe the County has been effective in attracting industry and jobs. Nearly three-quarters of Northampton County citizens think the County's strict regulations and restrictions are stifling necessary growth and development along Route 13.

Where growth should happen

Citizens of the County also weighed in on the question of where development and growth should take place by geographic location.

- 64% agree the County needs to protect land and coastal areas from development in order to attract tourist and support industries that rely upon the natural resources.
- The population split almost equally between those who believe new business construction should be encouraged only in already developed areas (45%) as opposed to those who believe that other areas should be considered (49%).

Data Reveals Dismal Condition of County

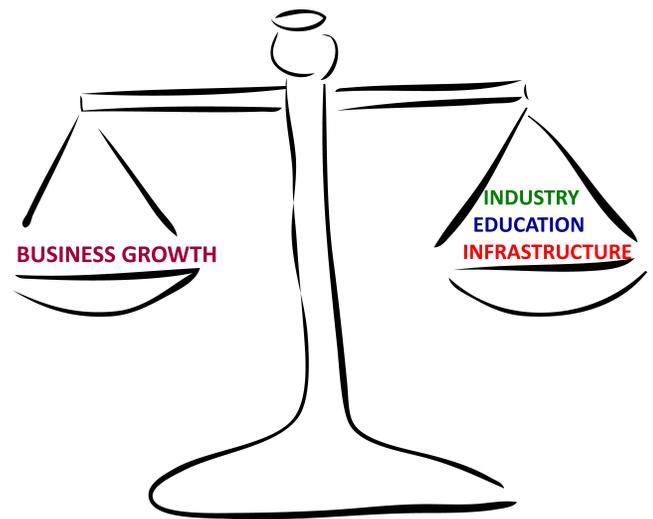
When it comes to the revenue picture, the time has come for Northampton County to accept the reality of its economic future and relinquish the romantic notions of the past. Second only to the voice of the citizens, are the expert opinions gathered from the CPAC's fourteen-month information gathering interview process. The experts range in varying fields from planning, transportation, local and state government, legislators, community and economic development professionals, retail developers, engineers, and many other disciplines.

From that group, the CPAC heard a variety of positions from different perspectives,

though all leading to the same place. Some of the declarations were so poignant they deserve comment.

Difference between commercial development and economic growth

The County's plans for development should recognize the difference between commercial development/growth and



economic development. A well-balanced growth strategy for the County will consider the short-term and localized nature of commercial development, and the broad concepts of long-range activities that are economic development initiatives. An ideal strategy to short-term new job and tax base generation will most likely come from commercial development activities.

The County may be able to incentivize targeted commercial growth in various ways, as well as promote public/private partnerships for targeted commercial activities to achieve short-term positive growth, particularly the commercial

property tax base. The CPAC acknowledges new economic development activities should not be expected to result in immediate gains, but instead focus on targeted projects with long-term gains.

County must improve customer service to businesses

The County must immediately improve customer service for new and existing businesses at all levels of county government. Local and regional business leaders are almost unanimous that the County is not business friendly in regulation, policy, or culture.

Use available resources for economic development

The County is not taking advantage of valuable economic development resources.

Government Organizations

The County must engage on a continuous basis with Virginia Department of Commerce and its Economic Development Partnership in order to avail the County of the vast resources available for economic development.

Tax Overlay Districts

The use of special tax overlay districts for improvements to public areas is essential for infrastructure development on an equitable basis. These tax overlays are a tool used in many communities to assist in orderly planned growth by creating funding for public improvements. Examples include how highway safety improvements for new commercial development can be funded by the specific businesses that benefit from them in an equitable method. This creates opportunities for targeted growth that includes a funding solution for necessary public infrastructure.

Results of Analysis

What the CPAC Learned

No matter who was making the contribution, the lesson was the same; Northampton County is in economic crisis and urgent need of drastic change. As of November 2012, Northampton County Public School District has a free/reduced lunch rate of 75.35%, broken down by locations:

- Northampton High School- 66.76%
- Occohannock Elementary - 80.57%
- Kiptopeke Elementary - 82.20%

The current Comprehensive Plan for Northampton County does not contain any goals or strategies that focus on reducing the poverty rate.

A comprehensive approach that addresses economic development, transportation, and housing is more likely to create real change for the County.

Poverty is an Economic Development Issue

The lack of economic opportunity has created a level of disenfranchisement that has almost become an accepted part of our culture. In Northampton County, the historical consequence of disenfranchisement for a disproportionate share of the population is significant. Studies show that the number of people living in poverty has risen since the 2000 census to more than 20% of the population.

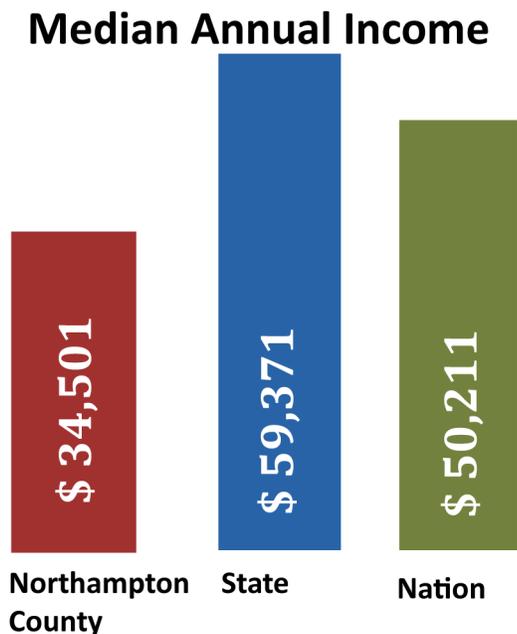
“The level and extent of poverty specific to Northampton County can no longer be ignored. Our label of Persistent Poverty, this categorical status of predictable economic failure by the County, must be eliminated. It must be acknowledged by every county agency and employee, as well as in every county document including the comprehensive plan - until it no longer exists.”

Bill Parr, CPAC Chairman

According to a recent community analysis prepared by the Eastern Virginia Medical School for the Eastern Shore Health District, a quarter of Accomack County children, 31.5%, almost a third, of Northampton County children live in poverty, and overall poverty(all ages) is 17.5%. Additionally, a quarter of the population is undereducated and unprepared to earn a living wage. Roberta A. Kellam wrote in his 2009 study, *Persistent Rural Poverty on the Eastern Shore of Virginia*: “Northampton County is identified as one of only two ‘persistent poverty’ counties in Virginia by the USDA Economic Research Service.”

Current Industries

Northampton County is woefully lacking in living wage jobs. Healthcare/social assistance, government, agriculture, and retail are the top four employment sectors in Northampton County. The unemployment rate mirrors the United States at 7.5 percent, and surpasses the state rate of 5.4. The same industries, with the addition of the construction industry, also experienced the largest number of unemployment claims in 2011.



Another indicator of the economic disparity is Northampton County's annual household income. The median household income is \$34,501. This is far below the state's median income, which is at \$59,372 and the nation's, at \$50,221.

Affected by the economic downturn of the past few years, Northampton experienced a reduction of 9.7% in sales tax receipts in

2010 from the same quarter in the previous year. The preceding two years also yielded lower revenues. In its 2010 economic profile of Northampton County, the Virginia Employment Commission reports the *Farm workers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquaculture* sector to be in decline, although the exact statistical data is classified as "non-disclosable" due to limited respondents. These are direct indicators of the decline of economic critical mass in the County and striking examples of the need for economic growth.

Industry Development and Innovation Potential

Northampton County not only needs to look externally for job creation solutions to its economic woes, but it should also seek to more effectively capitalize on the natural resources and existing "pillars of capital" for innovative initiatives. The CPAC recognizes the need for the County to explore the innovation potential of existing natural resources and industry sectors, such as retirement communities, value added seafood and agricultural products, increases

Northampton County needs to look externally for job creation and capitalize on natural resources.

in retail sales of seafood and agricultural products, destination tourism facilities, retirement communities, and other natural resource based activities that generate tax revenue in a sustainable manner.

Communities that have the ability to adapt are most likely to recover quickly. The goal is to learn from the lessons of yesterday, then apply them to the potential innovations of today. A 2007 community economic development report investigated several indicators of capital. This study is critical when considering a regional approach to economic development. What it is not capable of assessing, however, is innovation capital.

Examples of such potential development are:

Investment in Value-Added Agriculture and Aquaculture Industry Sectors such as:

- Seafood processing for value added products
- Potato chip and other vegetable processing facilities producing value added products
- Expansion of retail seafood operations county-wide
- County-wide seafood supercenter branding and marketing concepts
- Viticulture (wine) industry sector growth, which expands tourism opportunities

Potential Industry Opportunities:

- Tourist attraction destination oriented developments
- On and offshore wind energy industries
- Wind turbine test facilities
- Emergency medical care facility
- Retirement & continuous care independent care industries for seniors
- Major Hospitality Facility
- Port of Cape Charles industrial development

Route 13 Corridor

Route 13 is a strategic economic corridor. The current plan pushes commercial development from the highway into the town. As high traffic counts are required for development, this approach results in a challenge to stimulating commercial activity. In addition, not all towns want to increase traffic by having all commerce inside the town. A strong highway





development initiative may be useful in harvesting the revenue potential that can be gained from the transient and tourism markets. The current economic and financial realities of Northampton County are presently in conflict with the current comprehensive plan and its map, which are clearly based upon a goal of restricting growth seen from 1989 forward.

“The economic analysis shows that without managed commercial growth in and around the towns and on Route 13 with proper limited access and buffering, the County may not have sufficient revenue growth to meet even inflationary needs.” – Spencer Murray, Former Member Northampton County Board of Supervisors

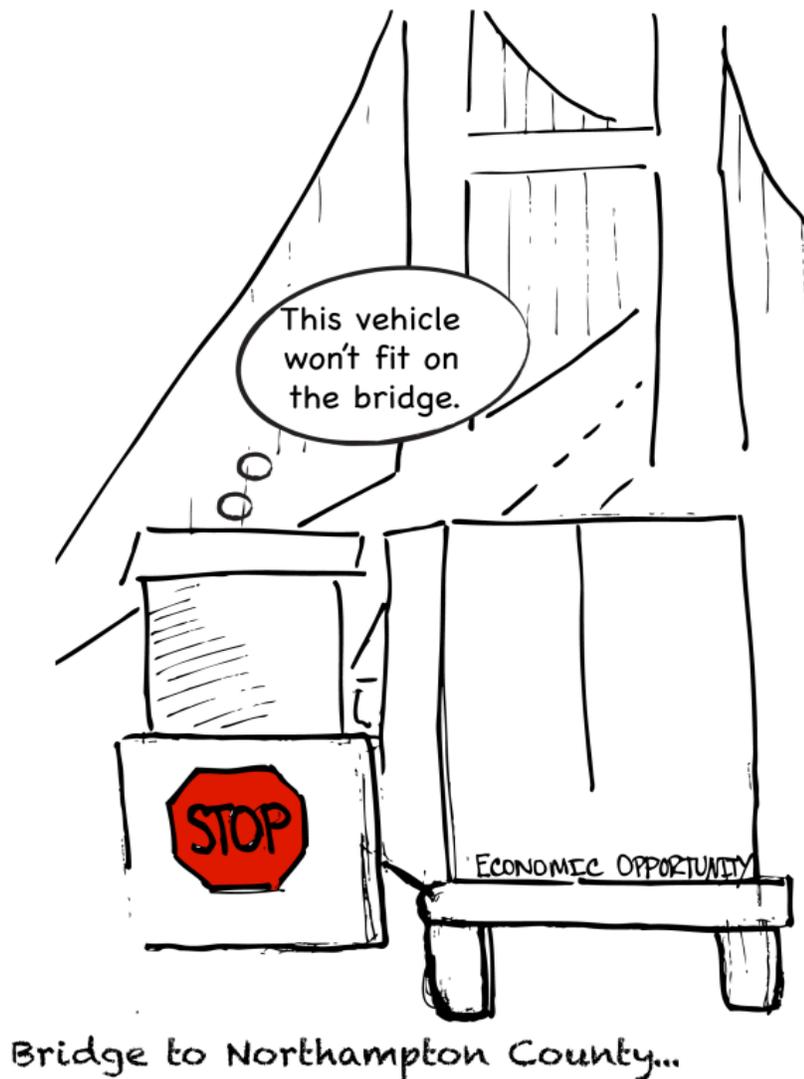
“The hypothesis that Northampton’s economy can be sustained simply through farming, aquaculture, and tourism, while discouraging obvious commercial, industrial, and recreational opportunities *has been proven incorrect.*”

Paul Berge, Former Executive Director A-N PDC

Bridges for Economic Opportunity

Geographically Northampton County is not just a peninsula. It is also an island of Virginia only connected to the rest of the state by a bridge, a factor that creates its own inherent economic challenges. The economic structure and policy of the County is the bridge for economic opportunity to enter Northampton County. Currently “the bridge” caters to specific industries and does not encourage all types of economic opportunities.

In order for certain opportunities to be successful, Northampton County must create an economic plan that will allow all “vehicles of economic opportunity” to pass through the bridge.

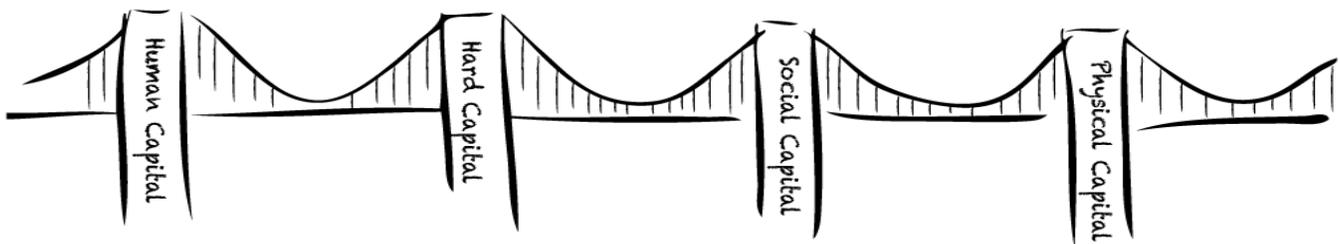


Comprehensive Economic Development

How does Northampton County create an economic environment that will allow all “economic vehicles” to enter?



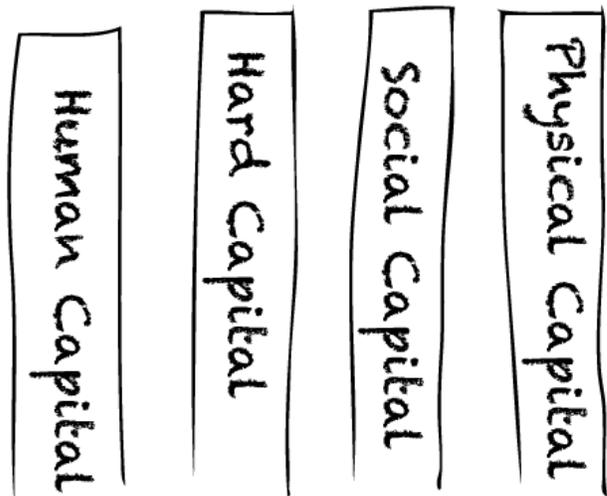
We create a “Bridge of Prosperity”.



Four Pillars

The bridge to economic improvement in Northampton County is supported by four key pillars of capital:

1. **Human Capital** (workforce),
2. **Hard Capital** (financial),
3. **Social Capital** (strategic alliances and collaborative partnerships) and
4. **Physical Capital** (infrastructure)



Each pillar is necessary in the process of building a solid economic foundation for the County.

Human Capital A community that is immediately responsive with a ready, equipped and skilled labor force is a community that will be most equipped to engage industry suitors. (See Examples in Appendix 2)

Hard Capital, while important, is not the most significant pillar of the four. The most successful economic development opportunities will be those not seeking substantial public investment.

Social Capital, on the other hand, is fundamentally important. The more engaged the community is in supporting efforts to increase the viability of an industry sector, the more success the initiative will achieve. (See Walla Walla example in Appendix 2)

Physical Capital While the most obvious, the need for infrastructure cannot be emphasized deeply enough. Northampton County must seriously and intentionally resolve the need for water and sewer infrastructure.

Suspension Cables

Like communities, every bridge is not built exactly the same way. Each design is specific to the terrain, the environment and projected capacity of the area that it is expected to

cover. In a suspended deck bridge, cables suspended via towers hold up the road deck in order to receive the expected traffic flow. Likewise, the community that is best equipped for economic development is one that is designed to provide the resources industry needs to thrive. The suspension cables are the specific tasks, which will accomplish the objective of the strategies. Each suspension cable is tied to the pillars through cable connectors.

The cable connectors of the bridge represent the different strategies that Northampton County leaders will use to connect to the pillars of economic prosperity. Cable connectors include: policy and legislation, public incentives, industry recruitment plans, industry development and innovation, comprehensive plans and related ordinances.



Recommendation #1:

That the entire economic plan section of the current *Comprehensive Plan* be replaced with this report. The base report, the twelve month economic plan, all related appendices, and documents should be used as the economic portion of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

Why

Modern commercial growth requires planning, development and zoning regulatory statutes that are entirely different from the current *Comprehensive Plan*. Drafted with a core agenda to severely restrict growth, the current plan significantly restricts development activity. This renders the County unresponsive to the marketplace. The CPAC finds that the current *Comprehensive Plan* is strategically flawed to address the current economic reality and cannot stimulate economic development in Northampton County.

“It is time to debunk some of the myths on which our comprehensive plan is founded in order to develop a plan that creates a positive net growth for the County.”

Spencer Murray

Recommendation #2:

That the Supervisors direct the Planning Commission to amend the *Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Maps* to include the following six maps for designation as Economic Development Areas as shown. Further, that the Supervisors also direct the Planning Commission to revise the zoning maps to include the development areas shown on the following maps with the maximum appropriate level of by-right uses possible within these designated Economic Development Areas.

Why

The CPAC finds that the existing *Future Land Use Map* is strategically flawed in addressing the need for commercial and economic development.

Current zoning districts have inadequate by-right commercial uses which are not conducive to stimulating economic development or sustainable levels of growth.

Recommendation #3:

That the county direct the Planning Commission to revise the *Comprehensive Plan* and related zoning ordinances to expand the development area north of Cheriton along the railroad track to include adequate by-right uses that would stimulate industrial growth.

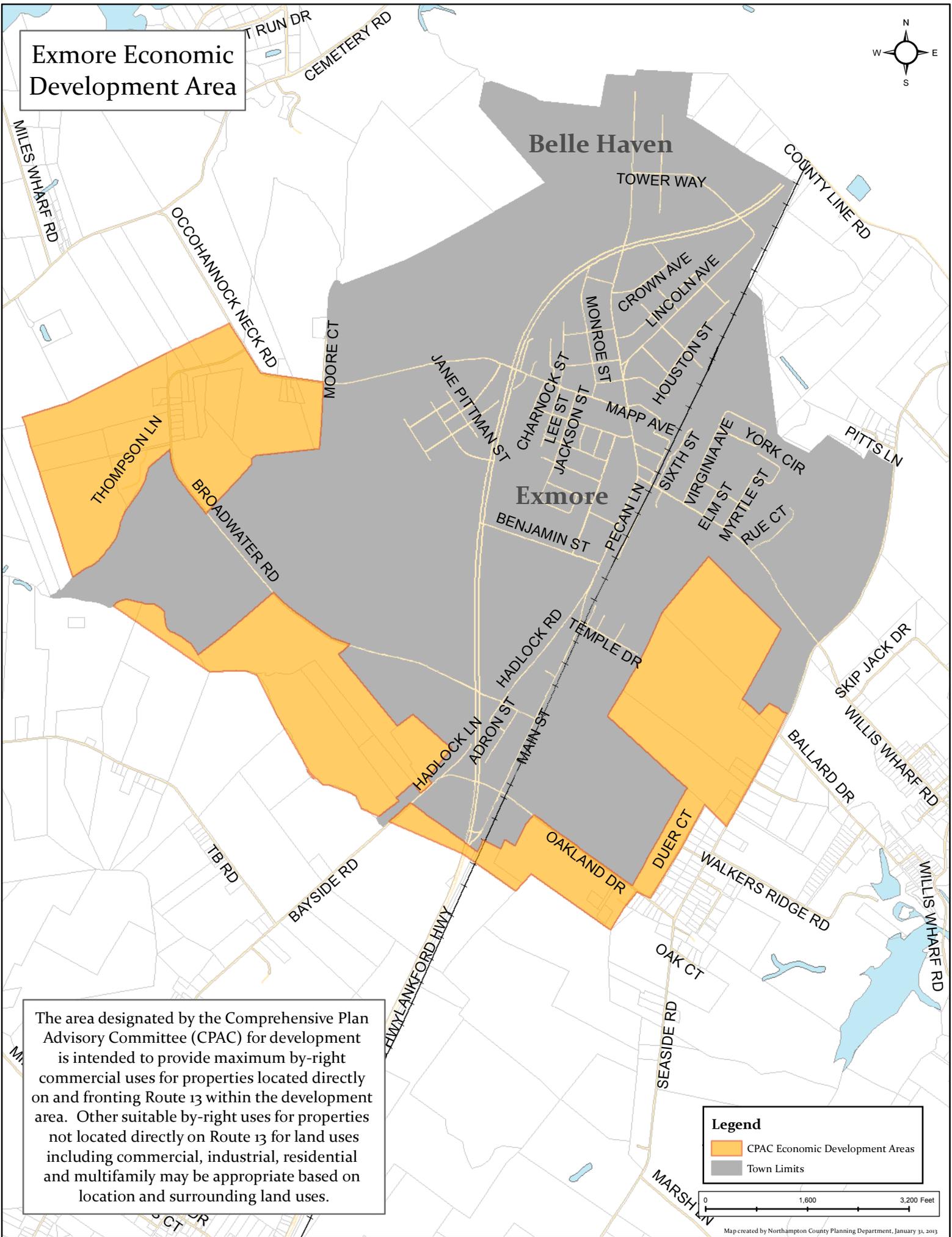
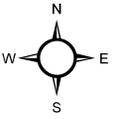
Why

The County has limited industrial land and inadequate open land zoned for industry.

Recommendations # 2 and 3 relate to development along the primary corridor. While promoting the CPAC's recommended development areas for various types of uses along Route 13 and the railroad, special consideration should be given to critical aquifer recharge locations and safe highway access.

"We simply cannot encourage farmers and watermen to provide year-round employment with benefits and living wages when their costs are rising, and their prices are falling. I have no idea what these incentives would be or how the County can afford them, but we must avoid unrealistic notions and empty words. Our challenges are real. We get no tax revenue from agricultural products such as soy beans and tomatoes. There are revenues from sales tax, machinery/equipment etc., but a relatively small percentage overall." Spencer Murray.

Exmore Economic Development Area

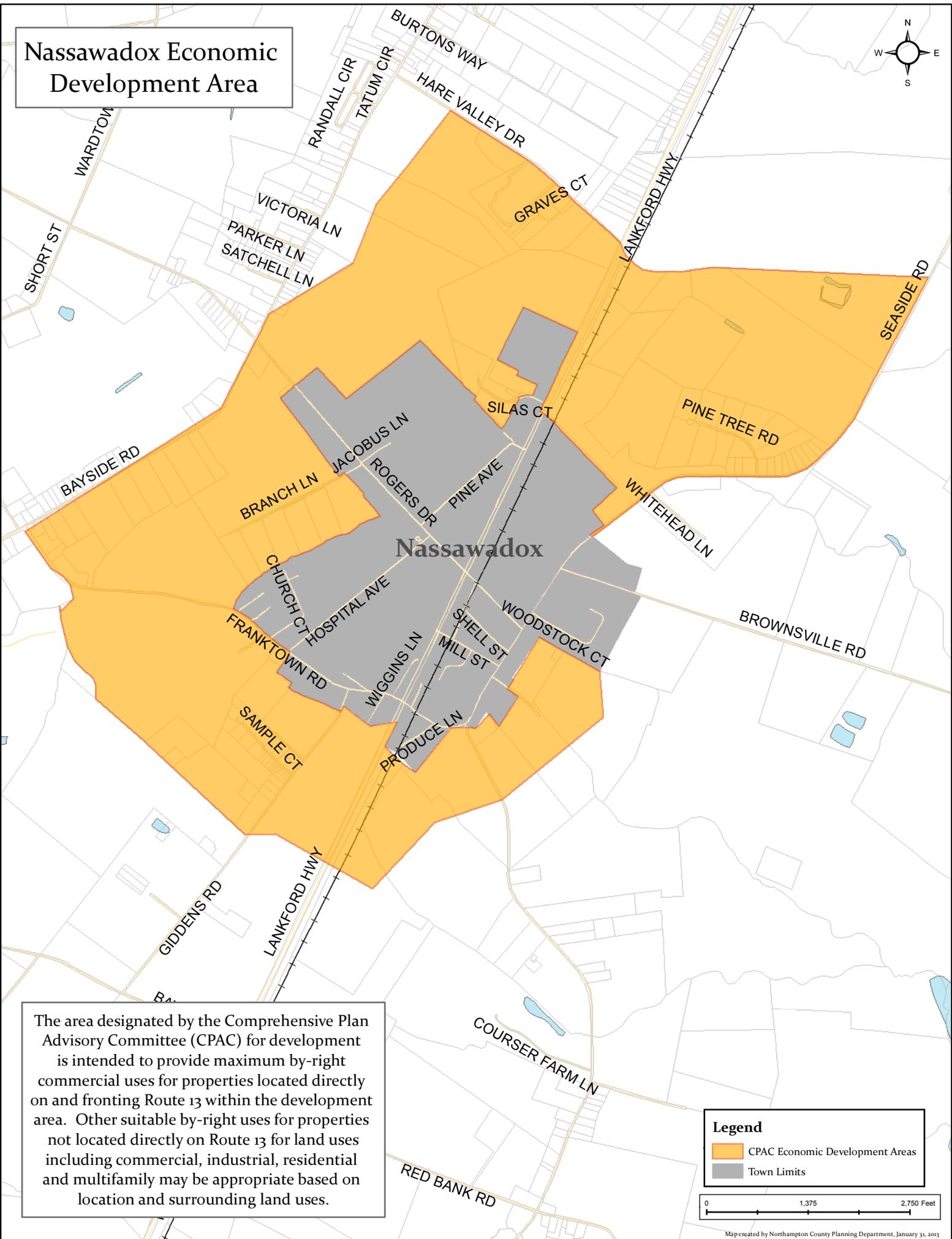
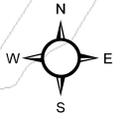


The area designated by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) for development is intended to provide maximum by-right commercial uses for properties located directly on and fronting Route 13 within the development area. Other suitable by-right uses for properties not located directly on Route 13 for land uses including commercial, industrial, residential and multifamily may be appropriate based on location and surrounding land uses.

Legend

- CPAC Economic Development Areas
- Town Limits

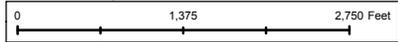
Nassawadox Economic Development Area



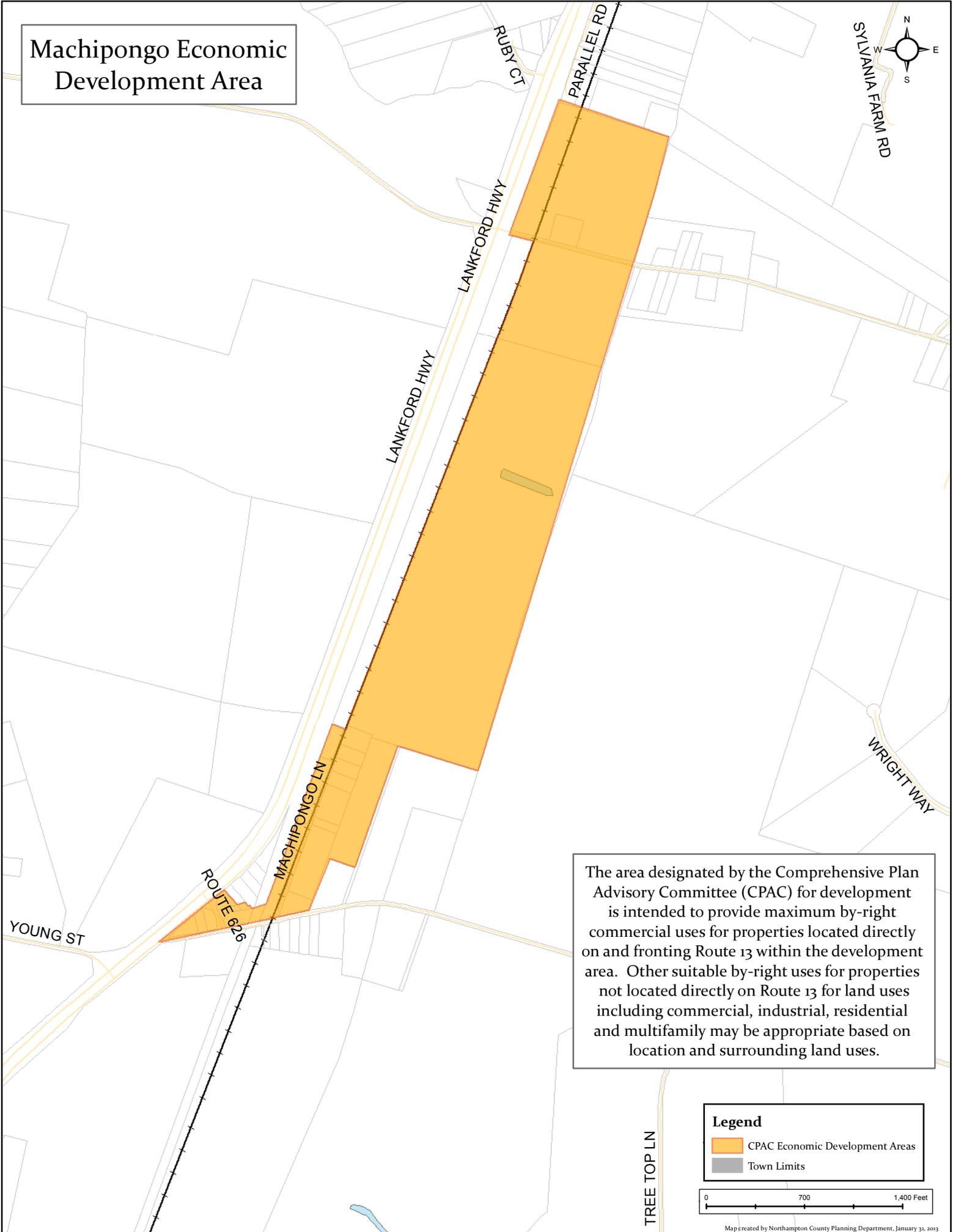
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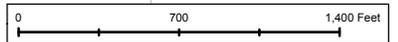
Machipongo Economic Development Area



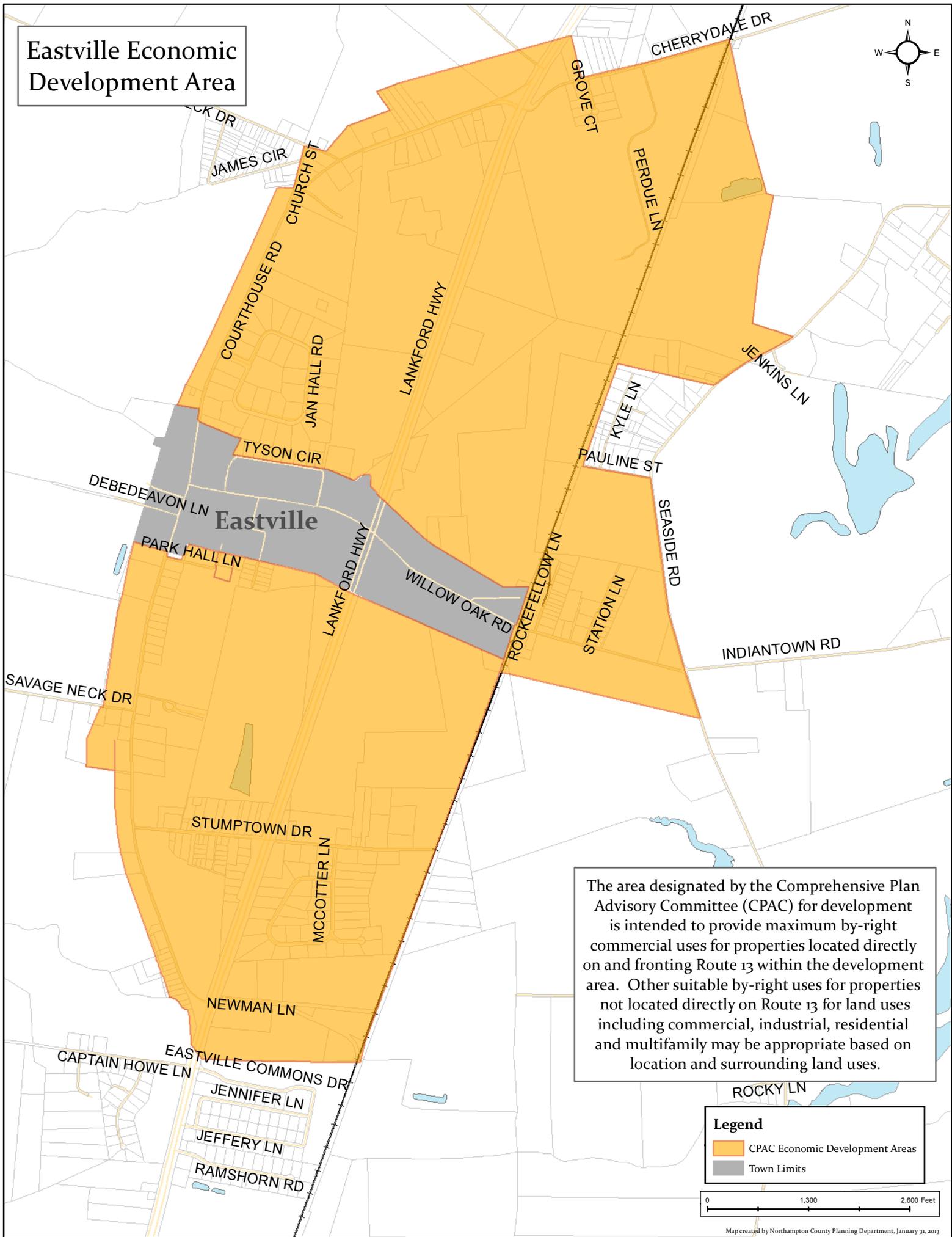
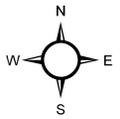
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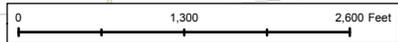
Eastville Economic Development Area



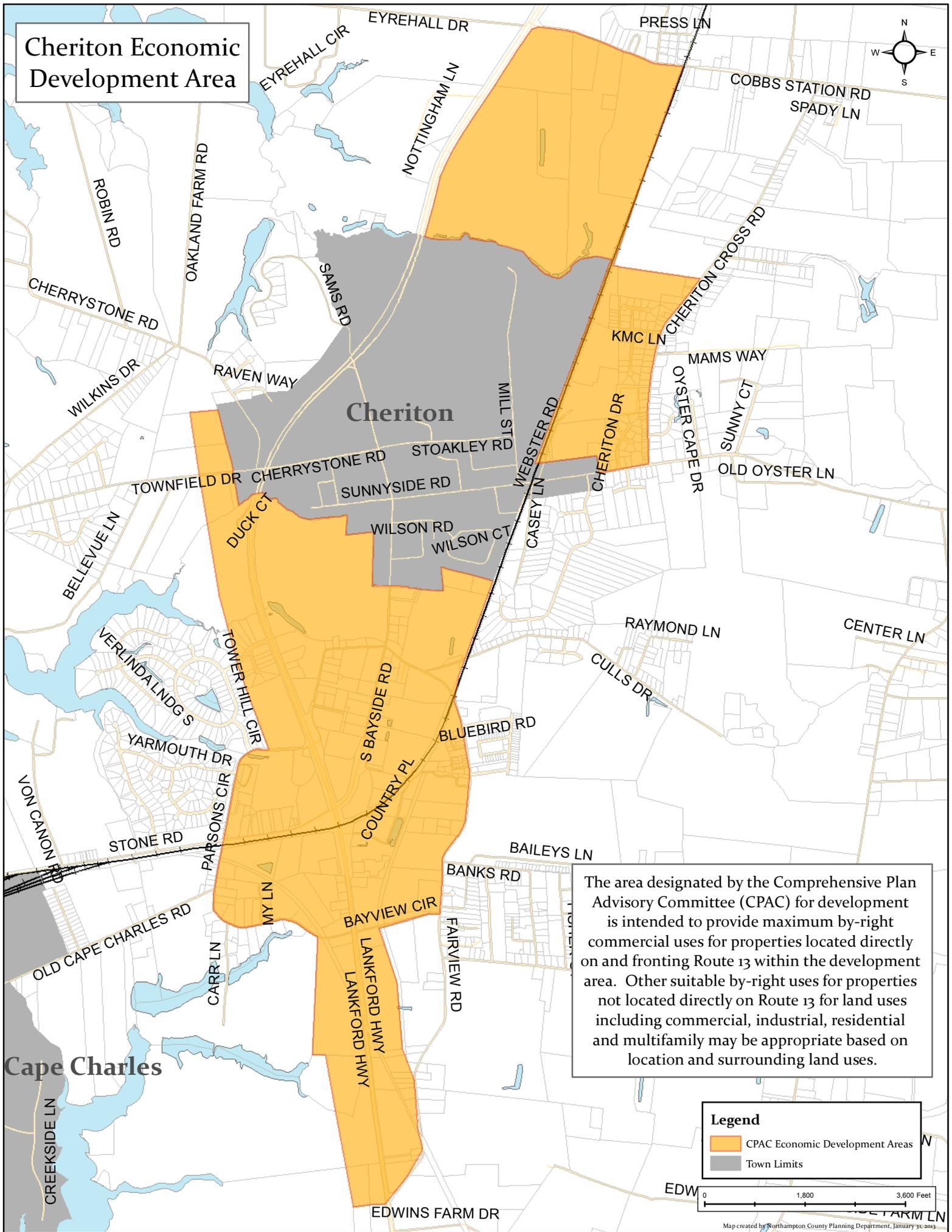
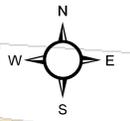
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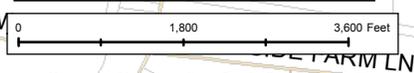
Cheriton Economic Development Area



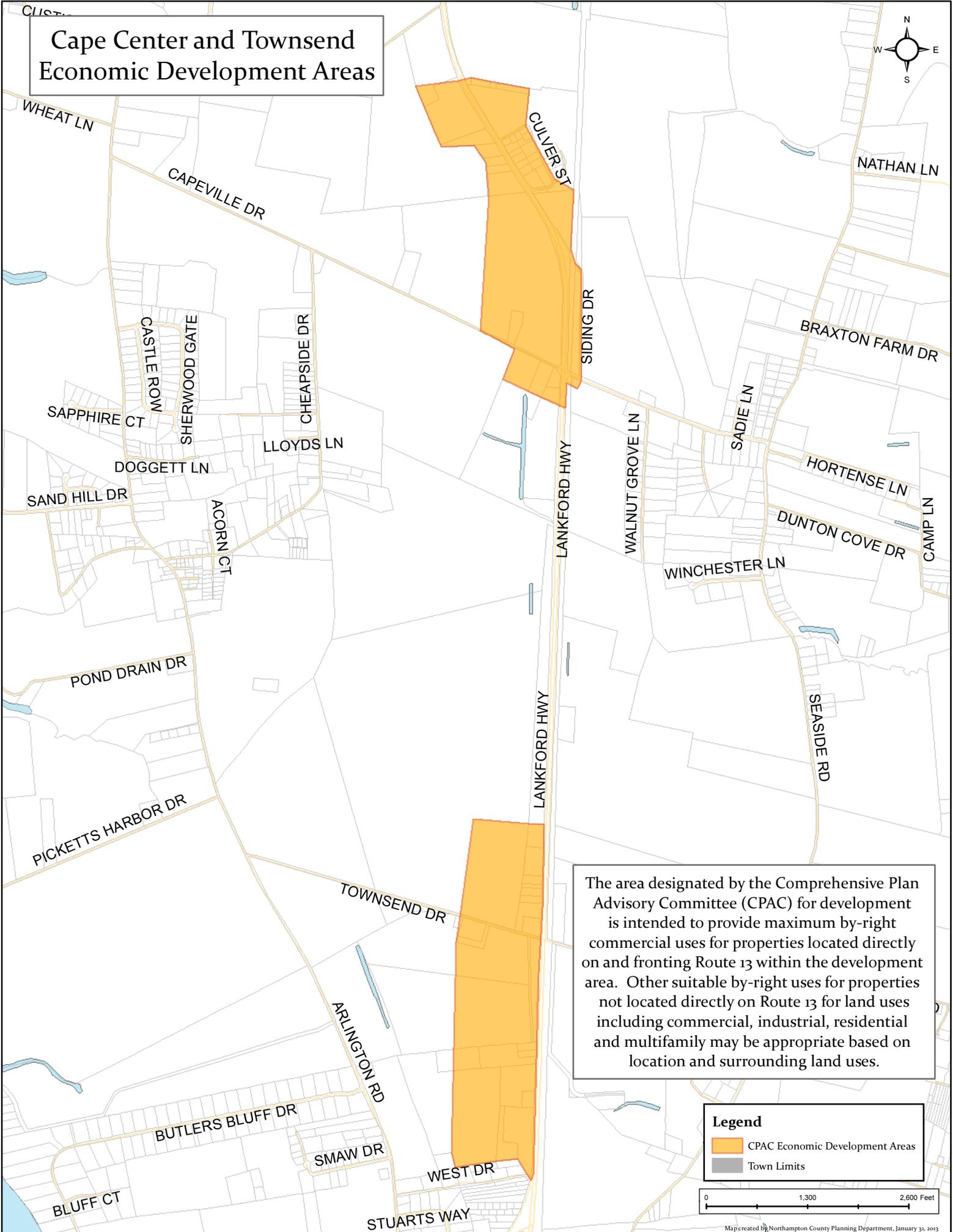
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- CPAC Economic Development Areas
- Town Limits



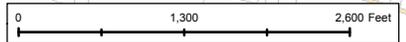
Cape Center and Townsend Economic Development Areas



The area designated by the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) for development is intended to provide maximum by-right commercial uses for properties located directly on and fronting Route 13 within the development area. Other suitable by-right uses for properties not located directly on Route 13 for land uses including commercial, industrial, residential and multifamily may be appropriate based on location and surrounding land uses.

Legend

- CPAC Economic Development Areas
- Town Limits



Recommendation #4:

That the Board of Supervisors make the elimination of *persistent* poverty in Northampton County a visible top priority for every employee, department, committee and agency of the county government. Include it in all of our county documents.

We recommend that the comprehensive plan section 1.3 *Vision for Northampton County* be modified to include the *Eliminate Persistent Poverty in Northampton County* and further revise the section number 1 *Introduction* and page 6 and section 1.2.5 *Community Character and Development Pattern* to reflect our true economic condition, which references that persistent poverty that may be a consequence of our “traditional development” patterns. This information is necessary in order for the *Comprehensive Plan* to correctly guide the land use decision process. Every goal of the *Comprehensive Plan* must first address the elimination of persistent poverty within the borders of Northampton County as its primary directive, until this persistence has been eliminated.

This should include the addition of a comprehensive plan section *entitled Poverty in Northampton County - its history and current status*.

Why

This objective provides a guide to economic development – for the best means of eliminating poverty is by successful economic growth. But it is also a quality of life issue for every resident regardless of economic or social status. When 1/3 of our children and their families live in poverty, the consequences have a direct impact on the other 2/ 3 and their families. The label of persistence, this categorical status of predictable economic failure by the County in allowing these conditions, is a message to the world about who we are and what we care about. It is not conducive to economic development efforts to carry this label, and it is not good stewardship of our community to allow it to continue.

Poverty gets to the heart of our need for economic growth inside of our borders as a county. It is the evidence of failed policies and the need for change. It is the target that our economic efforts must hit with accuracy to improve the quality of life for our people.

Recommendation #5:

That the position of the director of economic development should be an exclusive position reporting to the Economic Development Authority (EDA). The position of the director of economic development should serve as the chief advocate for economic development in the County to assist citizens and businesses in all matters involving growth and development of commerce in the County.

Why

Possibly, the most prominent of all of the recommendations of the CPAC is the necessity for an entity that is exclusively dedicated to economic development. In late September 2012, the CPAC invited the general counsel of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to discuss in a working session of the Board of Supervisors, the importance of establishing a Northampton County Economic Development Authority. Following that presentation, the Supervisors voted to create an Economic Development Authority to accomplish the goal. The CPAC has determined the new staff position would better serve the County's interest if the position were assigned and subject to the board of the Economic Development Authority.

“The planning director and economic development director should not hold the same position; it is a conflict of interest. A planning director who is graded on the number of jobs created will be conflicted when required to enforce sound development regulations, including some that may increase the cost of business.”
Paul Berge

Recommendation #6:

That Northampton County reviews the current county performance standards to identify potential revisions that are more conducive to economic development.

Why

Prior Boards of Supervisors stated mandates were to “reduce growth and density and substantively limit development along Route 13.” Their fears were driven by several streams of dialogue that have since been proven to be unfounded. Issues such as compromised highway safety, the possibility for an Interstate highway bypass on the seaside, and the potential elimination of the bridge toll have not materialized and are no longer a legitimate issue.

Recommendation #7:

That the Northampton County Economic Development Director should work collaboratively with the A-N PDC, Accomack County, and the local governments of the Hampton Roads community in its economic development efforts.

Why

The population size and geographic isolation of Northampton County demand that the County consider its neighboring communities. We must look at the economic viability of the region and its adjoining market areas particularly for purposes of promotion, brand identity, and to maximize exposure to nearby populations.

“The brand is not Northampton County; it is the Eastern Shore. An improved regional web presence is needed for economic development.” Paul Berge

Recommendation #8:

That Northampton County commits to have water and sewer infrastructure constructed by 2018. This includes contracting in advance to reserve wastewater treatment capacity in the Cape Charles facility for use in serving southern county commercial growth needs.

Why

No serious economic development strategy can be considered in the County without addressing the urgent need for water and sewer infrastructure, which is also necessary for environmental protection. Previous conversations have been held, but all have been bogged down in political banter and eventually faltered. The future of the County rests not only on addressing the issue, but resolving the issue.

“Northampton County must invest in water and sewer infrastructure in development areas with the greatest potential for success.” - Bob Panek PSA Chairman

Recommendation #9:

That the Board of Supervisors completes the creation of a Northampton County Economic Development Authority. The EDA should be included as a core element of governance in economic development matters. The Authority must have a funding mechanism, similar to the funding method used by the Tourism Commission, which provides it with working capital.

Why

Dedicated revenues are critical in providing the resources necessary for the EDA to achieve a sound economic future for Northampton County.

Recommendation #10:

That Northampton County acknowledges two of its very significant economic assets in its railroad and broadband fiber optic network. The CPAC recommends that these resources be analyzed for higher and better economic development use.

Recommendation #11:

That Northampton County analyze what portion of the critical ground water and deep aquifer recharge areas are currently developed and what portion in what locations can be developed with minimum impact to our fresh water resources.

Why

The CPAC acknowledges that storm water management and aquifer recharge are critical for the sustained health and economy of the shore. Recent scientific research reveals where our critical recharge zones are in more detail. The land use maps and zoning ordinances should be updated to reflect the best knowledge and technology. We should provide for development methods that enhance post development groundwater and aquifer recharge. Further, the County should support the continued development of the hundred-year plan to replace potable aquifer withdrawal for agricultural and industrial use with alternative sources.

BUILDING A STRONGER ECONOMY THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Twelve Month Development Plan

BECOMING A COMMUNITY OF COMMERCE 1

Northampton County should expect and realize a return on every investment of public resources. Investments should be quantifiable as a direct benefit to taxpayers. The Northampton County Board of Supervisors bring solid leadership and commitment to strengthen the economy. Through their efforts, solutions can be found to relieve current distress and position the region to realize its full potential.

Recent developments are: 1) Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, 2) the creation of an Economic Development Authority, 3) hiring of a Director of Economic Development. These are all significant steps in charting the course to a stronger Northampton County.

What is Comprehensive Economic Development?

Comprehensive Economic Development calls for the strategic investment of public resource into a community. This includes creating economies of scale in the commercial, retail, and industrial sectors. Collaboration with workforce training and preparation providers is also a crucial element for achieving economic development.

The Northampton County Department of Economic Development (NCDED) will serve as collaborative engine, fueling the economy through strong relationships with local municipalities, private sector industry, financial institutions and the local community. The NCDED should create a comprehensive assessment and inventory of all available capital, including tactical relationships, human, natural, financial and technical. The assessment will help leverage the limited resources of the county for

commerce through economic development.

The assessment should be followed by a process of comprehensive planning with consideration for the aforementioned resources. It will target of potential and existing industry sector matches, sound land use and long range master planning activities. Such activity will effectively chart a course for development through the review and evaluation of existing initiatives.

STRATEGIC INVESTMENT AREAS 2

As the aforementioned assessment and comprehensive planning are completed, key components of a comprehensive economic development strategy will emerge. The Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee has identified several “development areas” that they have determined to be poised for investment of county resources for strategic development opportunities. These areas are those that are most conducive to targeted growth and development opportunities of scale.

A second criterion for the aforementioned areas is the theme of potential uses that should be born out of the character of the existing community: i.e. natural resources, historical preservation, and ties to an existing industry sector. Potentially, all serve as strong influencers for what eventually happens inside the respective development areas. The development areas should receive individualized attention from the county to encourage investment in development activities.

Goal: To implement a market-driven approach to stimulate the economy and create strong collaborative partnerships with the private sector in order to create jobs and generate revenue in Northampton County, Virginia.

STRATEGIC RESOURCE ASSIGNMENT 3

The comprehensive economic development plan for the county will become more tangible, following the assessments, identification of resources and establishment of strategic priorities for targeted areas. At that time, identification and inventory of sources of economic development funding to provide industry incentives, build infrastructure and promote the areas for development activity. As the plan evolves, resources should be assigned to strategic initiatives and development areas to fully capitalize the development potential of the county. Layering of resources in an integrated development strategy allows the county to effectively:

BUILDING A STRONGER ECONOMY THROUGH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Target specific sources for appropriate uses**
- **Measure the effectiveness of its investments**
- **Resist the tendency to “chase dollars” with no specific programmatic concept**
- **Establish the regional and national competitiveness of the county in securing federal funding for economic development investment**

RESEARCH PLANNING AND COORDINATION

4

At the core of any successful economic development plan is a sound research strategy. The collection of both qualitative and quantitative data will allow the county to understand its state of recruitment and development readiness. Partnership and collaboration with universities, research organizations and other “brain trusts” can assist staff in mining critical information necessary for gaining insight to:

- **Identify potential links between local business and non-local markets**
- **Evaluate sales and purchases of local businesses and local market (customer base)**
- **Composition of the Workforce**
- **Determine new sales potential for local industry Pair up local retail market and retail businesses**
- **Evaluate the revenue circulation patterns of the county (inflow, retention and conversion rates)**
- **Cost Benefit Analysis – Growth vs. Development, Retention vs. Recruitment**

INNOVATION, TECHNOLOGY & SPECIALIZATION

5

The collection of data is critical in allowing the county to 1) evaluate the growth potential of new and existing industry sectors, 2) innovation potential of existing resources and 3) specialization potential through the integration of both. Most of the local towns and communities of Northampton County are short staffed and have no research, planning, economic development or technical staff. They do, however, rely on the support of the Accomack Northampton Planning District Commission. Northampton County can assist the local towns in realizing their growth potential through the collaborative efforts of compiling a database of research, analysis and technical support.

- **Sector Analysis of Targeted Industries**
- **Investment in Value-Added Agriculture and**
- **Aquaculture Recruitment in Targeted Industry Sectors**

POLICY AND LEGISLATION 6

No community can grow or develop its economy beyond the bounds of its policy and related legislation. In development, there are many layers of planning, land use, zoning and strategic tax incentives which are necessary in stimulating the local economy. It requires solid legislative leadership and committed citizenry.

- **Special Tax Districts for Amenity Development**
- **Tax Incentives for Targeted Industry Sectors**
- **Relaxation of Zoning Regulations**
- **Funding Appropriation for Economic Development Authority**

ACTIONABLE ITEMS AND DELIVERABLES 7

Under the guidance of the Board of Supervisors, Economic Development Director, and the Economic Development Authority the following actionable items and deliverables should be pursued in the next year:

- **Comprehensive Assessment and Inventory of Available Resources and Capital**
- **County-wide Master Plan**
- **Evaluation of Existing Projects**
- **Catalog with Proposed Assignment of Sources and Uses of Funds**
- **Platform for Compilation and Preparation of Research and Analysis**
- **Minimum of six (bi-monthly) group site visits with cross section of government, business and community citizenry to collect primary data from targeted industry sectors, innovation and specialization models**
- **Complete formation of Economic Development Authority**

Conclusion

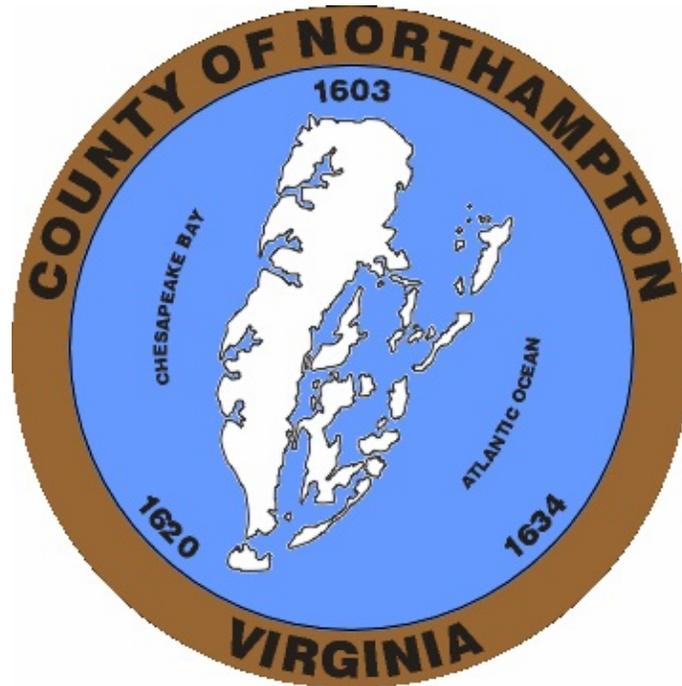
The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee believes that an economic crisis is looming in Northampton County. Economic development is more than roads, bridges and

infrastructure. It is pathways to success, bridges to hope and infrastructure for better communities. The best economic development activity does not only “build it so they will come”, but also seeks to undertake comprehensive approaches that “build it so they can get there”. This report is designed to serve as one of the

memorial documents for strengthening Northampton County’s sustainable economic future. The CPAC has spent innumerable hours in meetings, gathering data, and reviewing research, in its fourteen month effort to provide the County with the best possible information available for providing economic opportunities for its citizens.

The recommendations may first strike the reader as a significant departure from the comprehensive plans and supporting documents of the last twenty years. That is an accurate assessment because those plans prevented economic development. It is the position of the CPAC that forward thinking,

meaningful steps are the only option to preserve and improve the economic health of the County for posterity.



If we improve our economy, we will reduce poverty overall. While poverty will still exist, as it does everywhere, a more healthy economy can put it in check, by significantly reducing the numbers of citizens in poverty.

The CPAC believes in the protection of our important natural resources, but also understands the need

to enhance the human condition of our citizens with the opportunities for a better life. It is urgent that we find a balance between these competing priorities. We believe that it can be done, and that this report will lead us in the right direction.

As stated previously, this report acknowledges the crises we face and the opportunities we must act on, to create positive net growth for the County. We simply do not have the luxury of affording idealistic concepts for preserving the ways of the past. We cannot afford to rely on academic theories and outlines that govern the economic

development section of our current *Comprehensive Plan*. We must create practical new sources of revenue for the County while building bridges of hope for a better economic future for our citizens in the process.

The recommendations were not crafted without regard for the environment, protection and preservation of the natural resources, but to the contrary the CPAC understands that the while Eastern Shore is no less than its beauty, rural character and pristine shorelines, it is simultaneously no more than its people. For generations the people of Northampton County have understood how to live in harmony with the land and water to protect the fragile environment.

The CPAC believes that our economy and welfare of our citizens are equally fragile. The importance of a healthy economy is of an equal priority in order to preserve the quality

of human life in Northampton County. We believe that this balance must be reflected in the comprehensive plan, the zoning ordinance, and the overall governance of the County.

The recommendations in this report offer the opportunity to build a bridge to a prosperous future for all the citizens of Northampton County.



Appendix

1. Citizens Survey: Executive Summary
2. Examples of Models of Economic Development
3. Spencer Murray Report
4. Roberta Kellam Study
5. CPAC bios
6. CPAC charge
7. Changed Circumstance List – Planning Commission 2012
8. Reference List

Northampton County, Virginia

An independent survey conducted on behalf of The Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee, an Ad-Hoc advisory committee of the Northampton County Board of Supervisors.

Paid for by a grant from the National Association of REALTORS® at the request of the Eastern Shore Association of REALTORS® under the Smart Growth/Energy Efficiency/Sustainable Community polling program to assist in determining the opinions of residents of local communities in developing local land use policies. The REALTOR® Associations did not influence or participate in the content or outcome of this survey.

The Northampton County Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee:	
William C. "Bill" Parr, Chairman	Bill Payne, Vice Chair
Peter Stith, Northampton Co. Long Range Planner Committee staff support & recording secretary	Sandra Benson, Director, Northampton Co. Planning & Zoning office Committee oversight & liaison to Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors Committee Members
Mayor Billy Moore, Exmore	Mr. Roland P. "Butch" Bailey
Mr. Charles Bell	Mr. Patrick Coady
Dr. Richard L. "Dick" Drury	Mr. David L. Long
Mr. Peter Lawrence	Ms. Ava Gabrielle-Wise, Committee Advisor

Survey Methodology

American Strategies, Inc. and Myers Research | Strategic Services, LLC designed and administered this telephone survey conducted by professional interviewers. The survey reached 350 adults, 18 years or older from a random sample of phone numbers in Northampton County. The sample included both land lines and cell phones. The survey was conducted July 9 - July 15, 2012. The margin of error associated with these data at a 95 percent confidence level is +/- 5.2 percentage points.

Telephone numbers were generated by a random selection of both individuals with and without phone numbers to determine population distribution. Regional quotas were assigned to reflect the contribution of each area to the total adult population.

In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error: that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question. For example, if a response to a given question to which all respondents answered was 50%, we could be 95% confident that the true percentage would fall within plus or minus 5.2 percentage points of this percentage or between 44.8% and 55.2%. The margin of error for subgroups is higher and varies.

A copy of the filled in questionnaire, including exact question wording and order, can be found at <http://www.co.northampton.va.us/departments/planning.html>. This site also includes a longer version of this report, all verbatim responses to open ended questions and demographic cross tabulations.

Executive Summary

- **County off on wrong track.** A majority (56 percent) say Northampton County is pretty seriously off on the wrong track. Just 24 percent say things are going in the right direction (Slide 7).
- **Jobs and economic growth biggest issue facing Northampton County.** When asked to identify, in their own words, the biggest issue facing Northampton County, citizens overwhelmingly talk about jobs, the economy and economic growth (Slide 8).
- **Economy, education and access to emergency care top list of concerns.** When asked to rate their concern on individual issues on a scale of one to ten, the economy and jobs (8.8 mean score), public schools and education (8.7) and access to emergency medical facilities (8.1) registered the highest level of concern (Slide 9).
- **Most say county taxes and fees are too high.** Nearly six-in-ten (58 percent) think county taxes and fees are too high for the services they receive from the Northampton County government. Just over half (52 percent) feel the same way about state taxes and fees (Slide 10 & 11).

Executive Summary

- **Business and commercial growth is too slow.** A strong majority (76 percent) say the pace of business and commercial growth and development is happening too slowly. Only 16 percent see it as happening at about the right pace (Slide 12).
- **Current efforts perceived as ineffective in attracting industry and jobs.** Only 35 percent say the effort by county government to encourage business development through agriculture, aquaculture and tourism has been either very (5 percent) or somewhat (30 percent) effective. Most say these efforts have been not very effective (31 percent) or not effective at all (27 percent) (Slide 13) .
- **No clear direction on which industry will encourage the most job growth.** No one industry is seen as being significantly more effective in promoting future job growth. About one-quarter say that Route 13 development (28 percent), tourism (25 percent), environmentally responsible industry (25 percent) or agriculture (22 percent) would be a “very effective” way to bring more jobs to Northampton County (Slide 14).
- **County needs more than tourism and agriculture to improve economy.** When forced to choose, 61 percent say the county needs to develop other businesses and industry besides tourism to improve the local economy. Just 20 percent agree more that the environment and natural resources are the county’s most important job creator. When thinking about tourism, three-in-four (78 percent) agree that the County needs additional attractions and amenities to attract more tourists to the area (Slide 15 & 16)

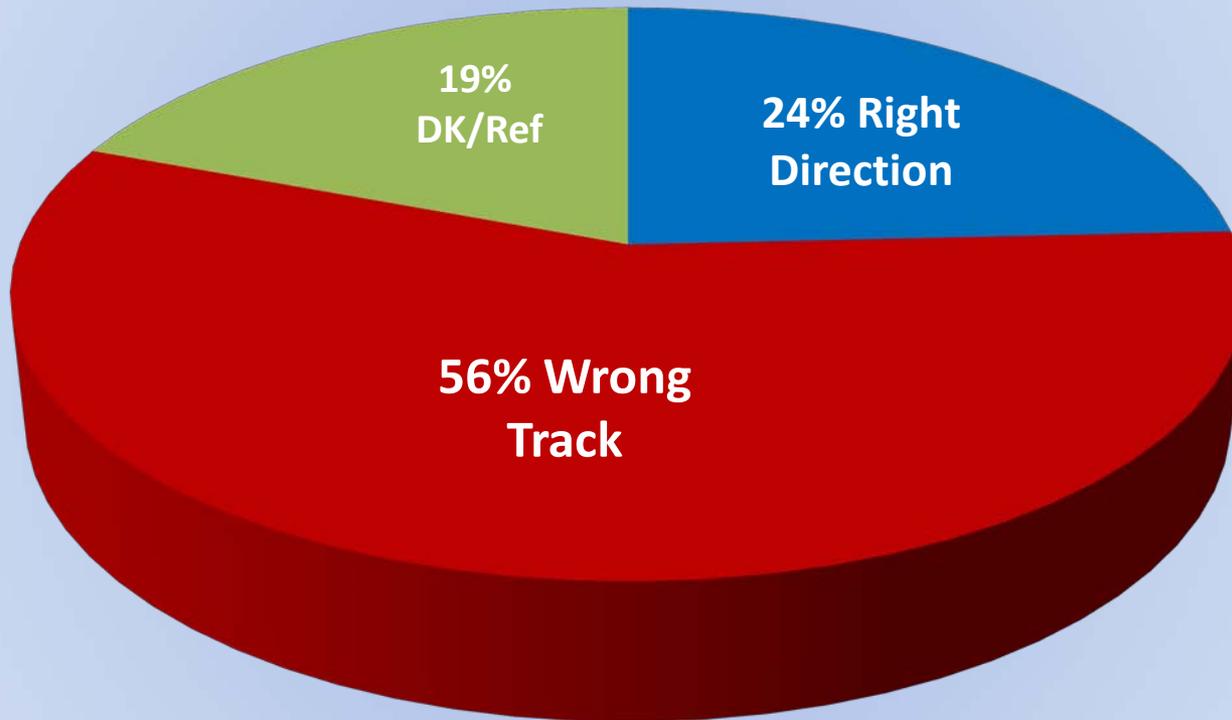
Executive Summary

- **Regulations and restrictions are stopping business opportunities.** Three quarters (75 percent) agree that there are too many regulations and restrictions that are stopping the development of new business opportunities along Route 13 (Slide 16).
- **When pushed, majority say county needs to loosen regulations rather than maintain controls on growth and development.** Residents are conflicted on the need to protect open space and land for agriculture and tourism and the need for economic growth. But when forced to choose, 55 percent agree more that regulations and restrictions on economic growth need to be loosened to improve the economy. One-quarter (24 percent) agree more that the County needs to maintain controls on local growth and development. One-in-five volunteer that they would like to see both (11 percent) or would not answer the question (9 percent) (Slide 17).
- **Split on where development should occur.** Nearly as many agree (45 percent) that new business construction should be encouraged only in already developed areas as disagree (49 percent) (Slide 18).

Executive Summary

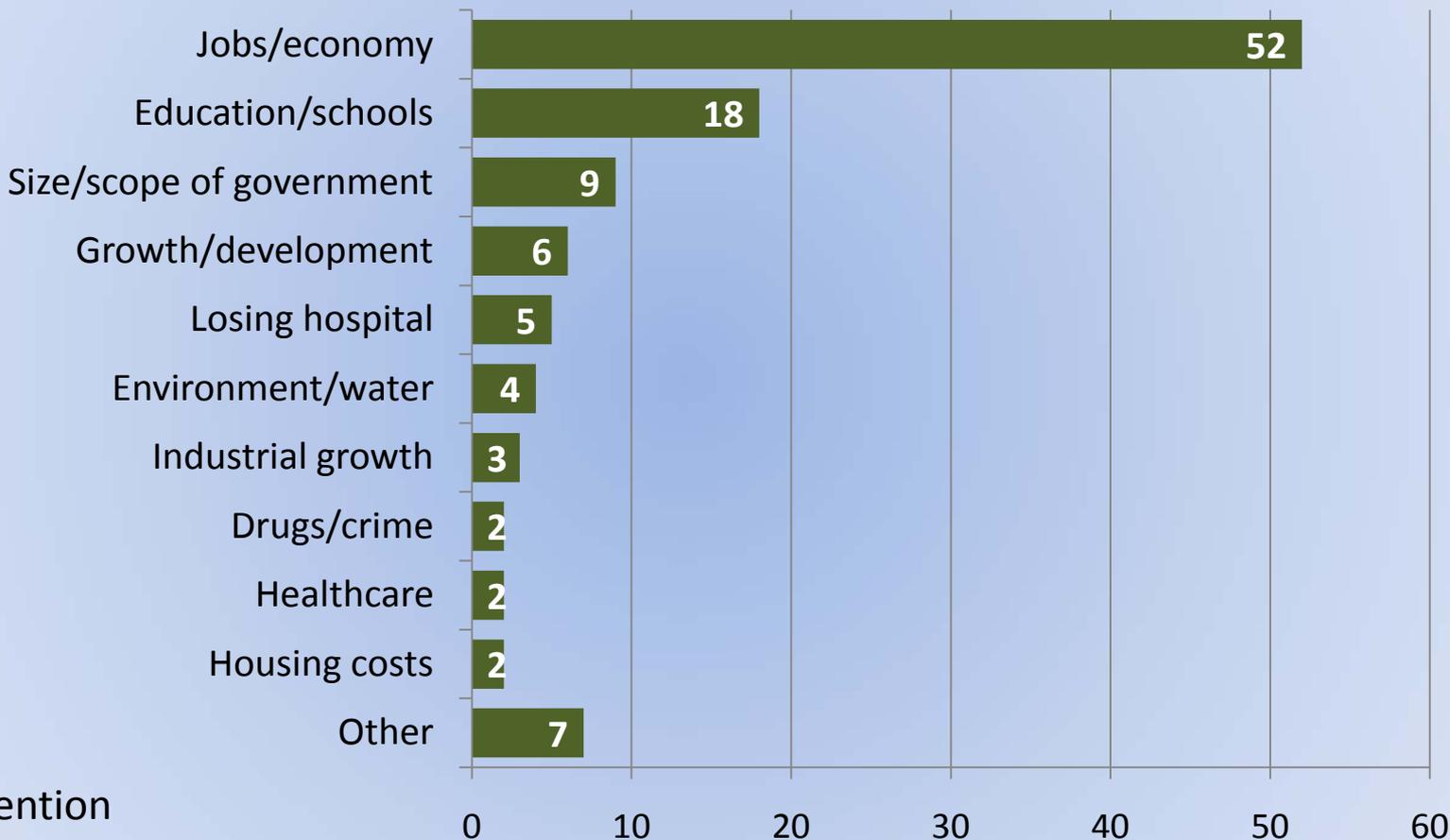
- **Protecting land and coastal areas still important.** Residents are conflicted between the need to preserve land and the need for economic growth. Two-thirds (64 percent) agree that the County needs to protect additional land and coastal areas from development in order to attract more tourists and help industries that depend on natural resources (Slide 16).
- **Better schools, friendlier business environment, emergency medical facility and holding the line on taxes top priority list for local officials to consider.** Looking forward, county residents place the highest priority on improving public schools (61 percent rate a “10” on a ten point scale), creating a business friendly environment that attracts new companies and jobs (55 percent), establishing an emergency medical facility in southern Northampton County (45 percent) and holding the line on county taxes and fees (45 percent). Residents place a high priority on most items tested (Slide 19).

Majority Say County Is Off On the Wrong Track



Q.3 Generally speaking, do you think that things in Northampton County are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track?

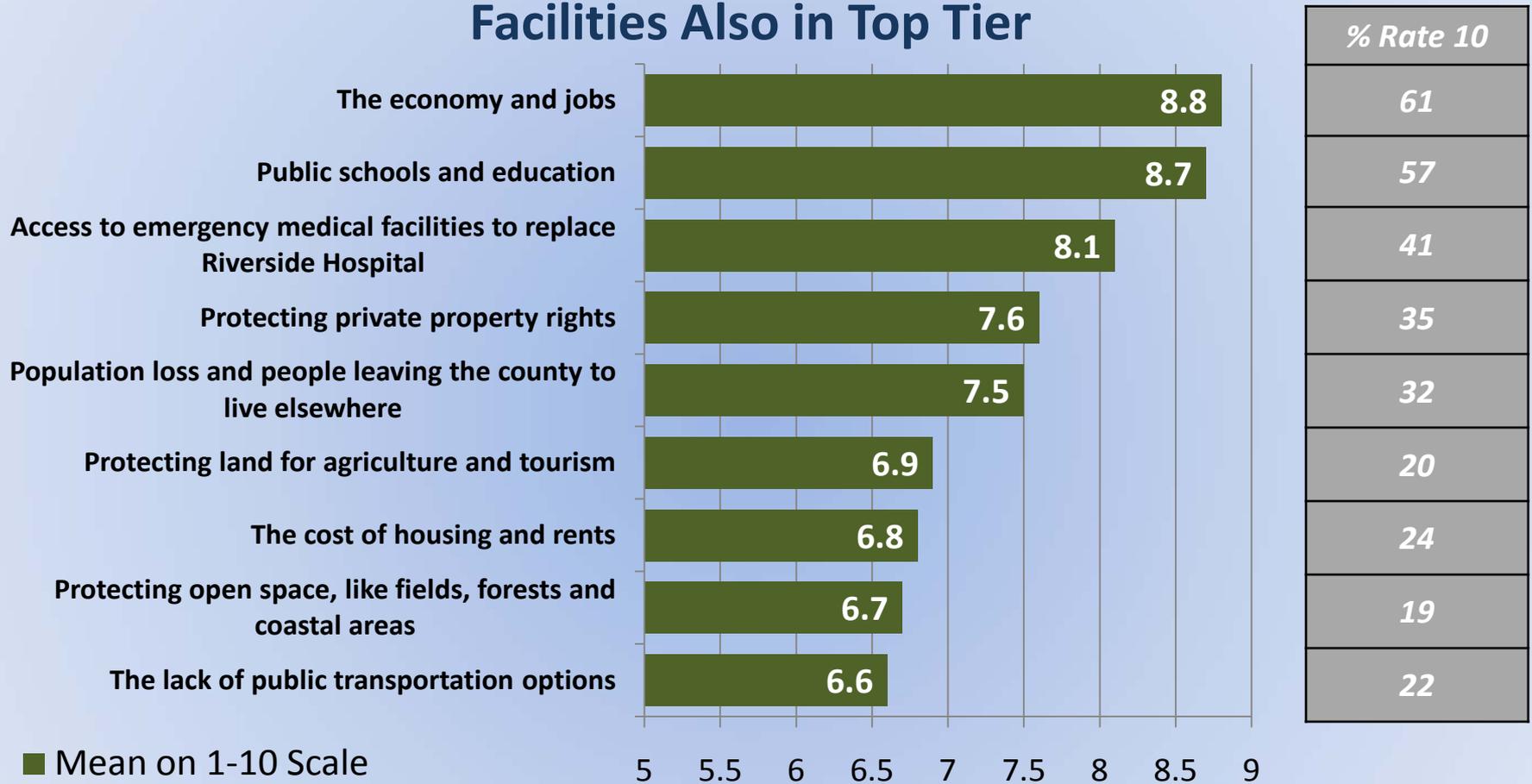
Biggest Issue Facing Northampton County: Jobs and the Economy



■ % Mention

Q.4 And what would you say is the biggest issue facing Northampton County that local elected officials should focus on?

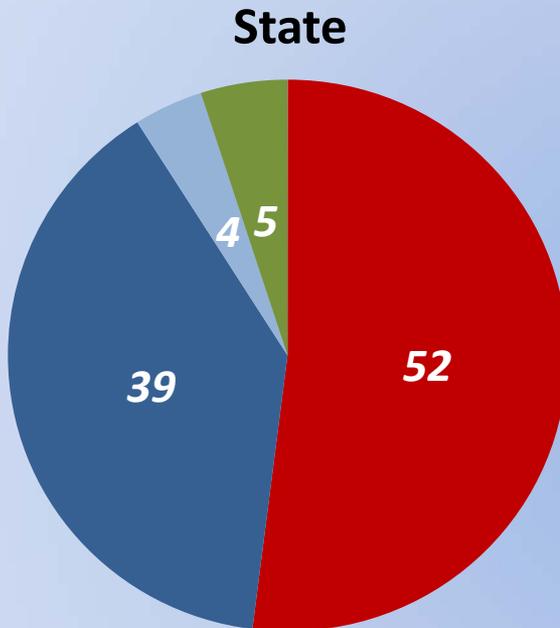
Economy and Jobs Tops List of Concerns; Schools and Medical Facilities Also in Top Tier



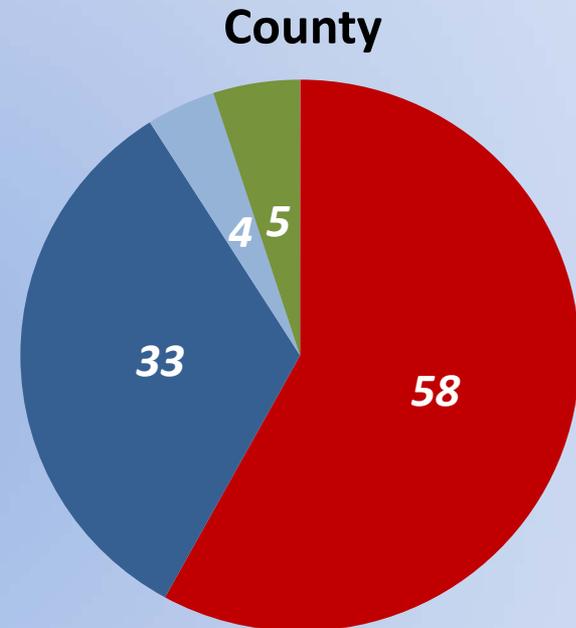
Q.5 Now I would like to read a list of issues facing Northampton County. Using a scale of 1 to 10, where a 1 means that issue does not concern you at all at this time, and 10 means that issue concerns you the most at this time, please rate each of the following. Of course, you can use any number between 1 and 10, the higher the number the higher your concern.

Both State and County Tax Load Seen as Too High

Nearly 6-in-10 Say County Taxes Too High



■ % Too High ■ % About Right
■ % Too Low ■ % DK/Ref



■ % Too High ■ % About Right
■ % Too Low ■ % DK/Ref

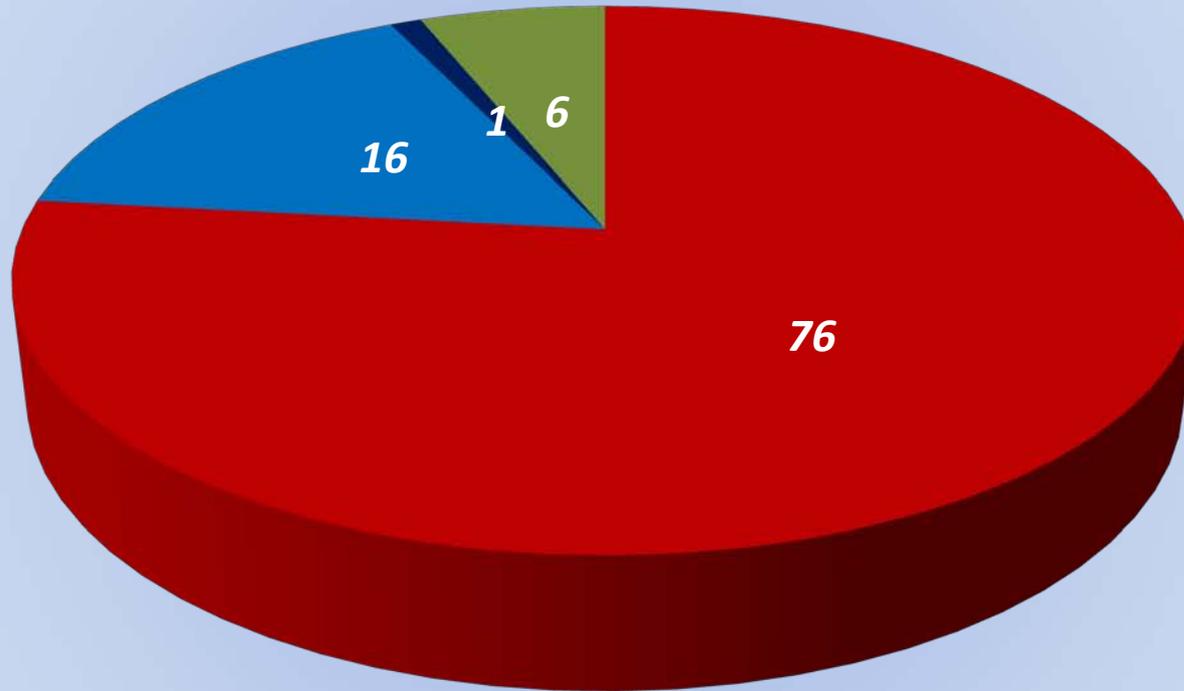
Q.14/15 Now, thinking about taxes and the services you receive from your state government/the Northampton County government, would you say the taxes and fees you pay in Virginia/the county are too high, too low, or about right?

Perceptions of Tax Load Driven by Education

County Taxes	Total	Non-college graduates	College graduates
% Too High	58	67	47
% About Right	33	31	36
% Too Low	4	1	8
State Taxes	Total	Non-college graduates	College graduates
% Too High	52	65	36
% About Right	39	32	48
% Too Low	4	1	7

Q.14/15 Now, thinking about taxes and the services you receive from your state government/the Northampton County government, would you say the taxes and fees you pay in Virginia/the county are too high, too low, or about right?

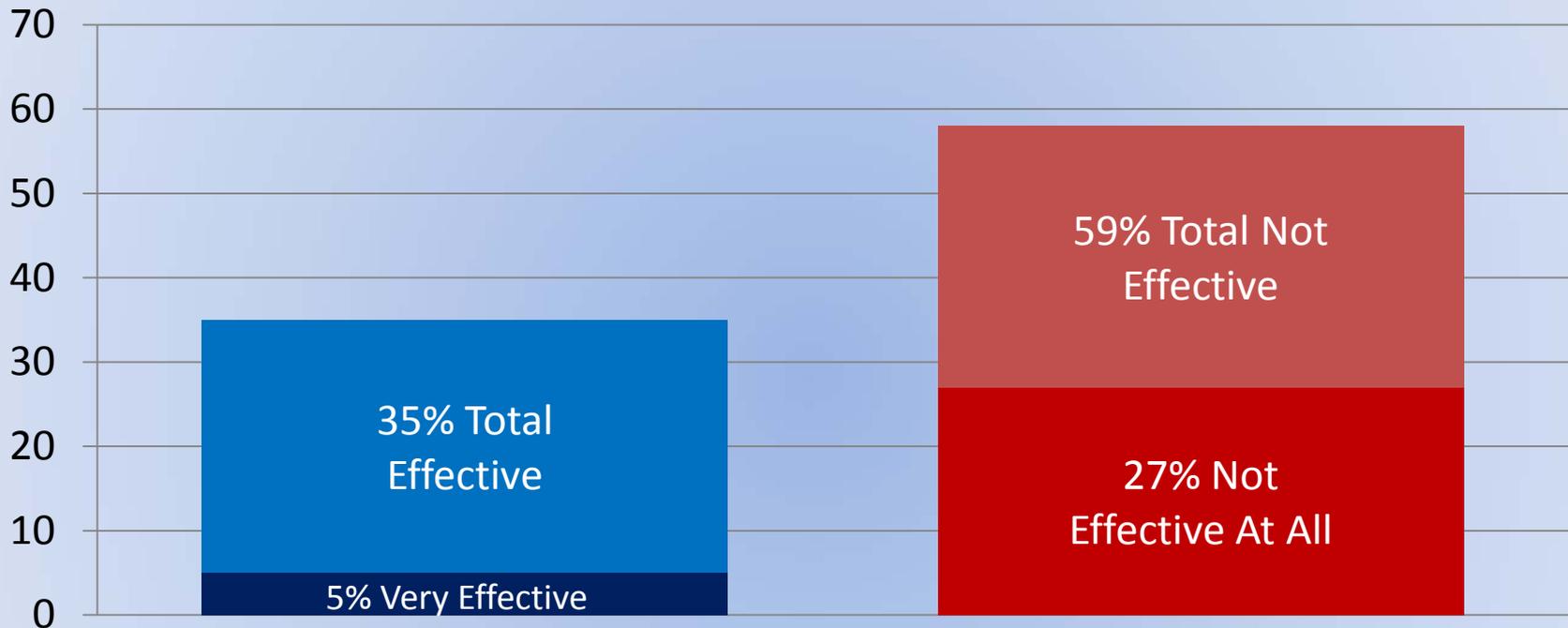
Virtually Unanimous Agreement that Business and Commercial Development is Happening Too Slowly



■ % Too slow ■ % About the right pace ■ % Too fast ■ % DK/Ref

Q.22 Would you say the pace of *BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL* growth and development is happening too fast, too slow, - or is it happening at about the right pace?

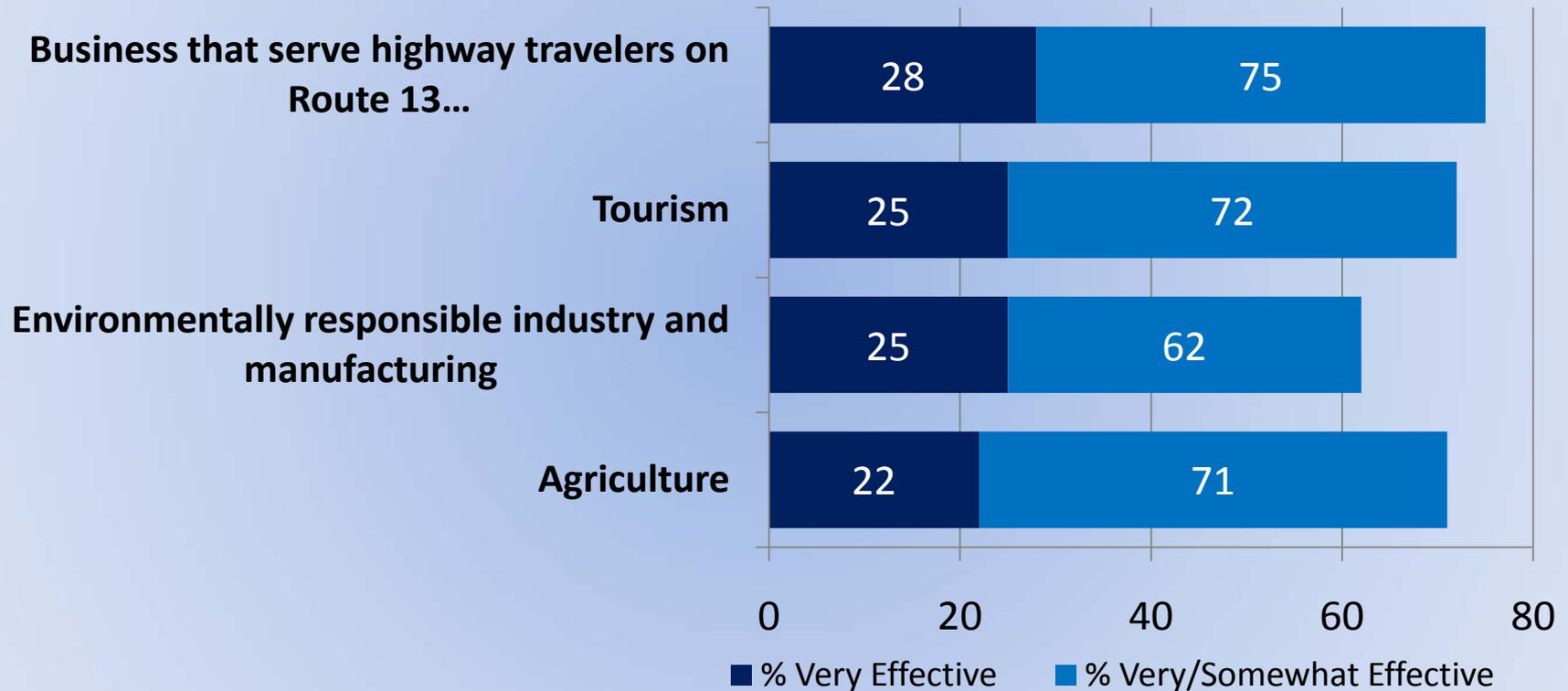
Current Business Development Approach Seen As Not Very Effective



Q.16 As you may know, in the past few years the Northampton County government has tried to encourage business development in the county by promoting and providing incentives to the agriculture, aquaculture and tourism industries. How effective do you think those efforts have been in attracting industry and promoting job growth in Northampton County - very effective, somewhat effective, not very effective or not effective at all?

Most Opportunities For Business Development Categorized as Only Somewhat Effective

Little Intensity On Any Option



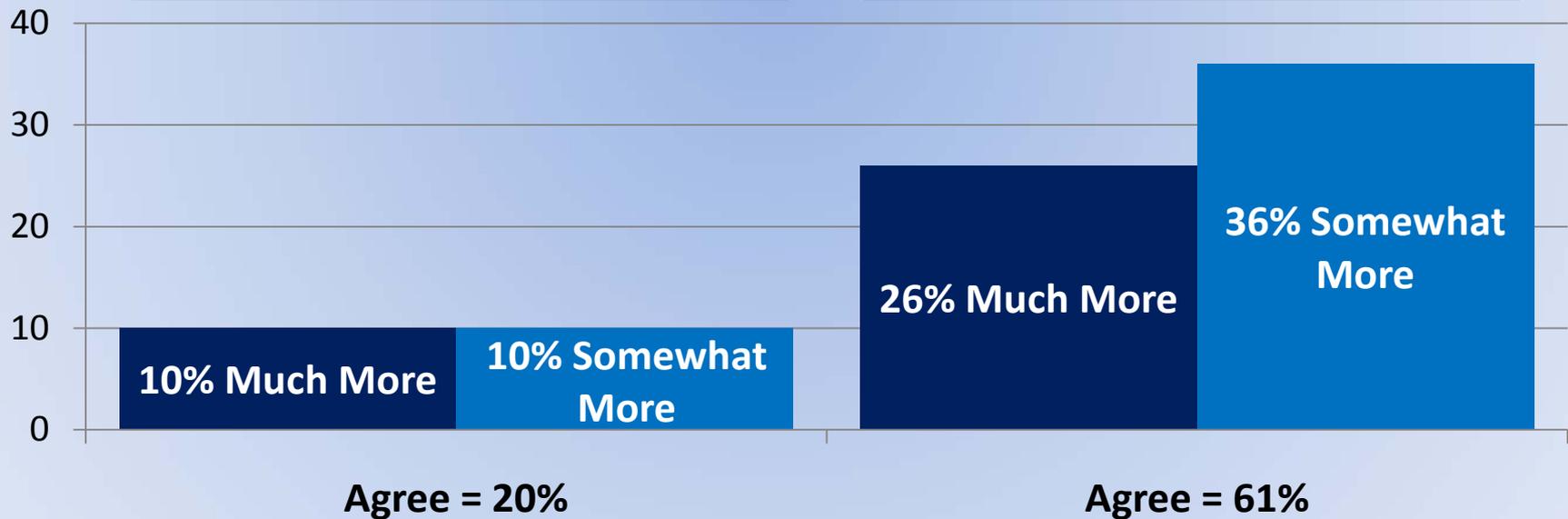
Q.17 Now I am going to read a list of industries and business opportunities that may contribute to FUTURE job growth and business development in Northampton County. For each, please tell me whether you think that industry is a very effective, somewhat effective, not very effective or not at all effective way to bring more jobs to Northampton County.

Most Agree With Need to Develop Other Industries Beyond Tourism

Q.28 Still thinking about this issue, I am going to read you some pairs of statements, and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement, even if neither is exactly right.

Northampton's most important job creator is the environment and our natural resources. It is unrealistic to expect other kinds of business and industry to locate here.

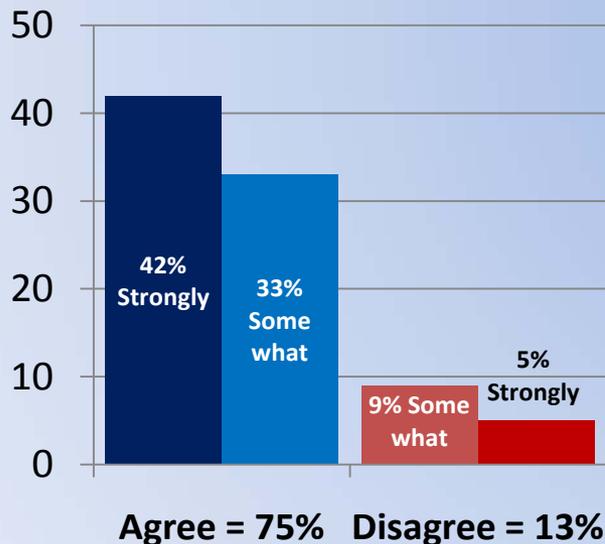
Tourism and agriculture do not provide enough jobs to support Northampton families. We need to develop other businesses and industry to improve the local economy.



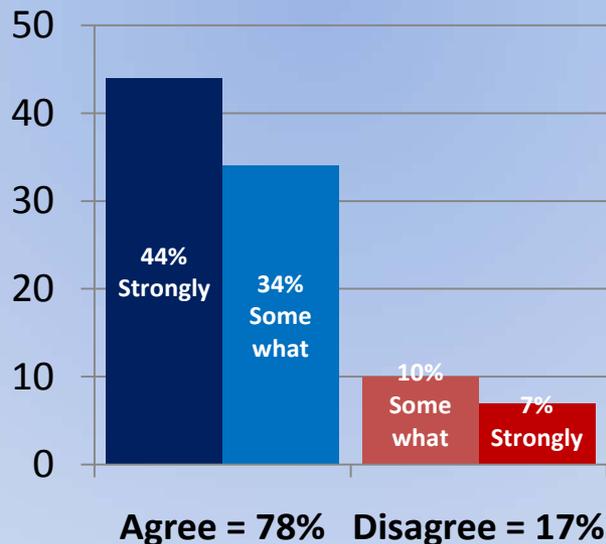
Residents Agree on Need to Loosen Regulations and Add Attractions, but Also Want to Protect Land

Q.23 Many people have different opinions about growth and development. I am going to read you some statements about growth and development and after I read each one, please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

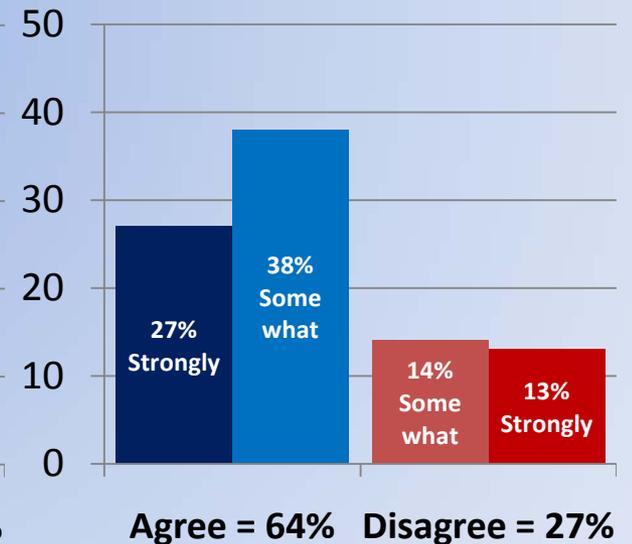
Q.24 There are too many regulations and restrictions that are stopping the development of new business opportunities along Route 13.



Q.25 Northampton County needs additional attractions and amenities, like restaurants and hotels, to attract more tourists to the area.



Q.27 Northampton County needs to protect additional land and coastal areas from development in order to attract more tourists and help industries that depend on our natural resources.

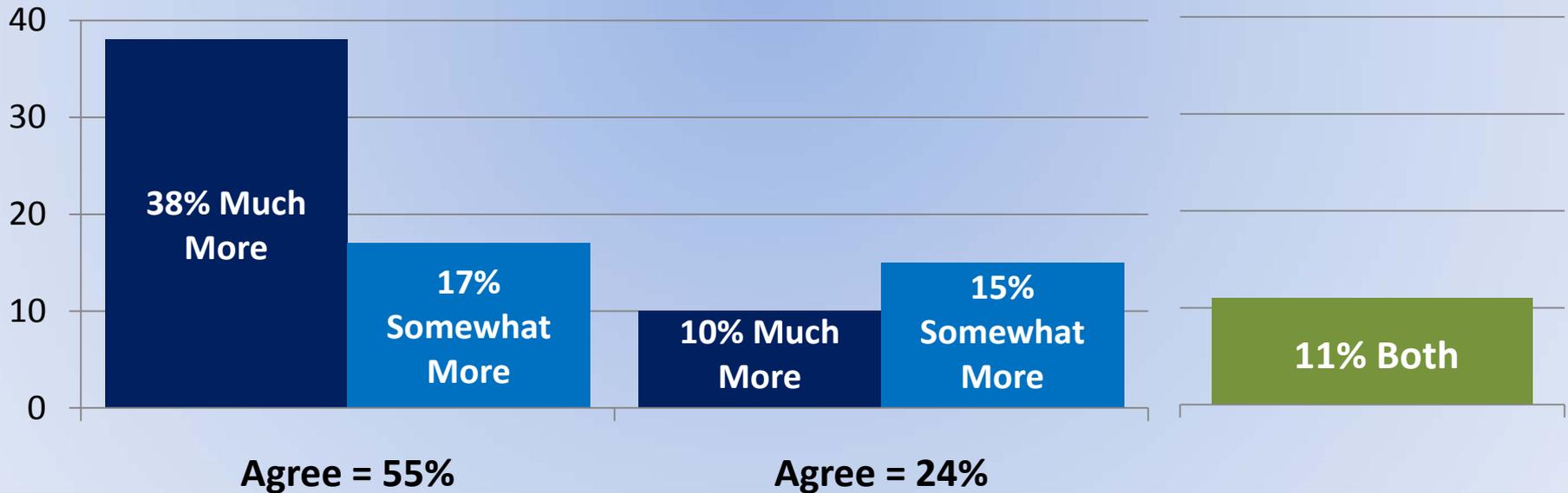


Majority Say County Needs to Loosen Regulations and Restrictions

Q.28 Still thinking about this issue, I am going to read you some pairs of statements, and I want you to tell me whether you agree more with the first statement or more with the second statement, even if neither is exactly right.

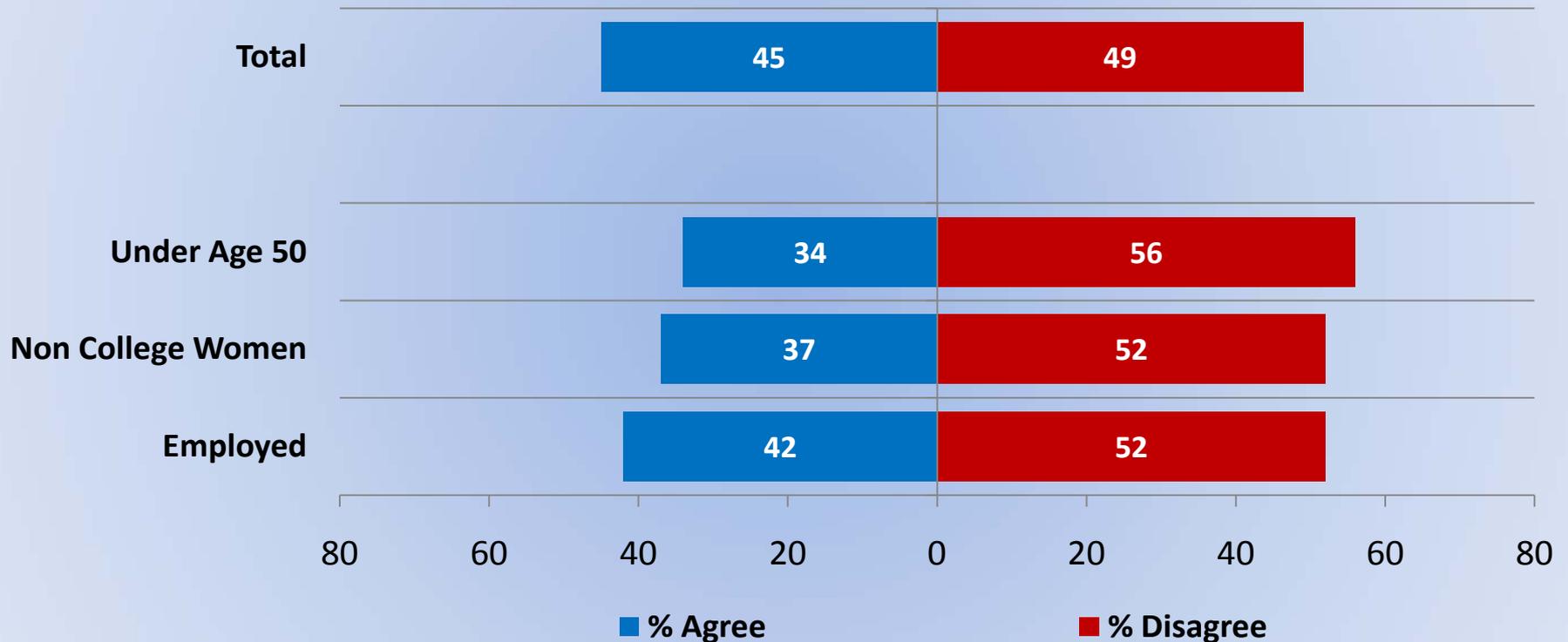
We need to loosen regulations and restrictions on local growth and development in order to improve the local economy, expand the tax base and bring more jobs to our area.

We need to maintain controls on local growth and development in order to protect the environment, keep our highways safe and preserve the local quality of life.



County Divided on Need to Restrict Development to Already Developed Areas

Younger Residents, Women and the Employed Most Likely to Disagree

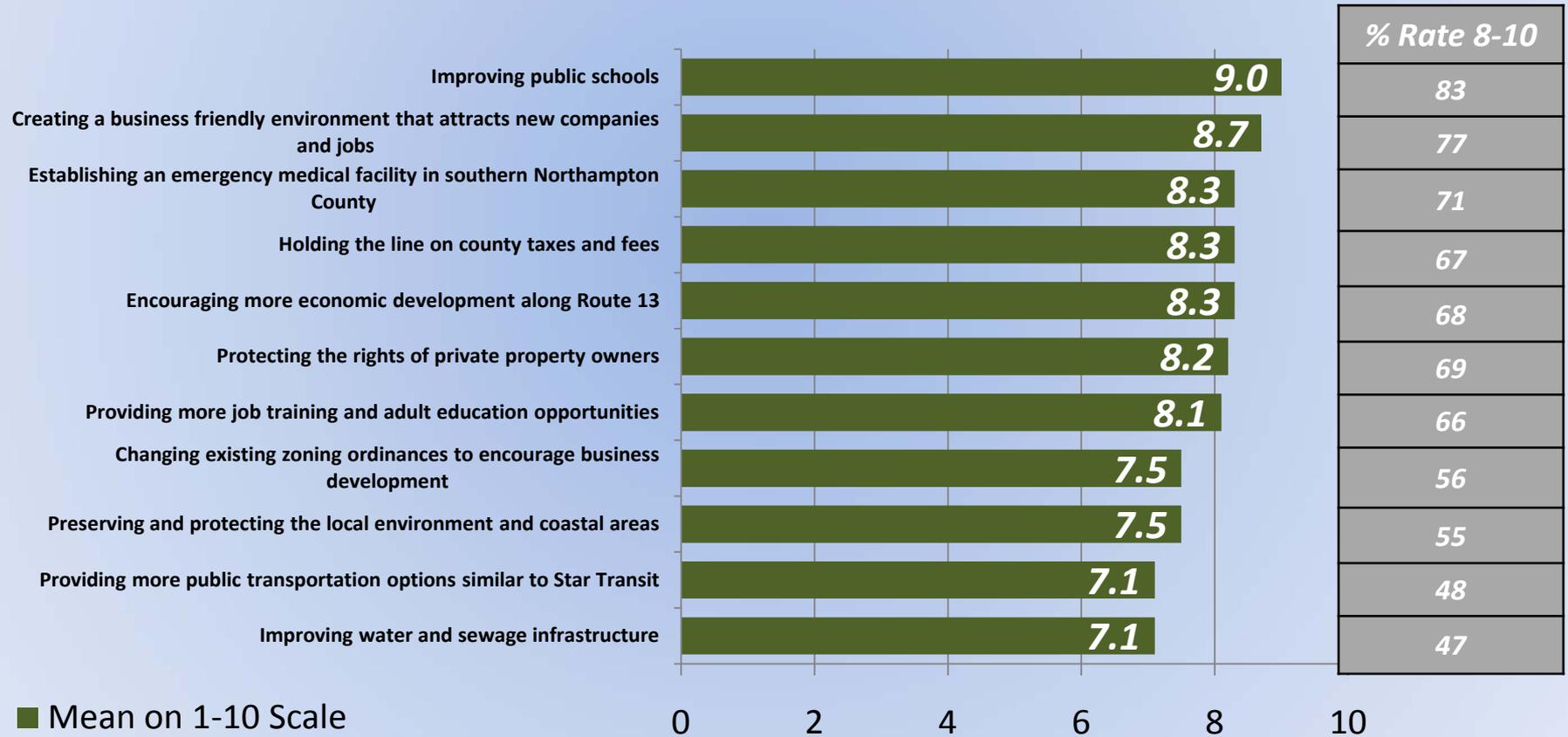


Q.23 New business construction should be encouraged only in already developed areas.

Schools & Business Friendly Environment Top Priority List

Medical Facility, Taxes and Private Property Rights Strong Second Tier

Q.30 Switching gears a bit, I am going to read some issues that people say should be a priority for our local government and elected officials in Northampton County. Please rate each of the following using a scale of one to ten, where one means that issue is not a priority for you at this time, and ten means that issue is a top priority for you at this time...



Joe Goode, Senior Vice President at American Strategies, was the lead researcher on this project. Goode has worked for and advised political campaigns, non-profit organization and corporations for twenty-five years. Goode is the lead pollster for the National Association of REALTORS® Campaign Services program. Goode has conducted polls and focus groups for more than 100 state and local REALTOR® associations across the country. Previous to his tenure at American Strategies, Goode was a Chief Operating Officer, Vice President and Senior Analyst at leading Washington, DC polling firms including Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research and Lake Research Partners. For more information, visit <http://amstrat.com>.

Myers Research | Strategic Services, LLC. Myers has two decades of experience in public opinion research and politics, working on numerous elections from the local level to Presidential campaigns, as well as assisting in message development for a broad array of institutional and corporate clients. For more information, visit <http://www.myersresearch.com>

Examples of Models of Economic Development

Senior Retirement Communities: Solomons Island, Maryland

Solomons Island is a quiet waterfront fishing village located just 55 minutes south of the Washington beltway where the Patuxent River meets the Chesapeake Bay. A historic town dating back to the colonial period, the upscale retirement community today boasts numerous marinas, seafood restaurants, gift shops, a boardwalk, a gourmet grocery, and a sculpture garden. This continuous care retirement community (CCRC) caters to the elderly from independent living through advanced-stage dementia clients.

The median age of Solomons Island is higher than that of the Eastern Shore at 56, but the median income is also significantly higher at \$74,318, suggesting a population with more discretionary income to contribute to the local economy. It is a thriving community, and like Northampton County is ripe with grape vineyards that produce award-winning wines.

With a median age in Northampton County of 47.7 years (37.7 in the United States), the industry sector that emerges as a natural candidate for attention and investment is the Senior Care Industry. With the rapid increase of an aging population nationally, the Senior Care Industry sector is represented by many businesses. These include rehabilitation centers, home health care, housing and residential facilities, retirement communities, and other secondary and tertiary businesses, all of which create opportunities for Northampton County. Given Northampton County's high percentage of senior-aged citizens, the unique geographic location, and natural resources; the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee urges the County conduct a sectorial analysis exploring the growth potential for the Senior Care Industry in Northampton County and its possibility as a significant economic opportunity.



Solomons Island Bridge

Workforce Training and Development: Connecting Industry and Workforce: Eastern Shore Community College Department of Nursing & Healthcare

The civilian labor force of Northampton County has declined over the last five years despite national economic growth. Economic development works best when industry not only creates jobs, but creates jobs for the local population. Still, such connectivity is not an automatic, organic offspring of the typical industry recruitment or development initiative. The first priority of employers is to locate where there is the best skilled labor force.

When done well, Industry and Workforce Collaboration is the ideal goal for a region that is seeking to create jobs and establish its local citizens in living wage jobs. One such opportunity for exploration in Northampton County has been found in the Eastern Shore's existing senior care industry. The Eastern Shore Community College has an excellent nursing/health care department offering students multiple career opportunities from CNA to LPN and RN, Medical Coding, Billing & Medical Office Administration, as well as non-credit Pharmacy Technician and Phlebotomy classes. The Community College is well underway in nurturing a highly-skilled healthcare workforce for corresponding industry sectors to serve the existing senior and retired population. Placing a sound economic development strategy upon that foundation, designed to capitalize on the job creation potential for the healthcare, senior care, and the retirement age demographic represents the kind of collaborative models for workforce and industry that can prove most productive.

The population that typically fills the jobs that are created in this field is the indigenous population. Training is received through a post-secondary process. These jobs deliver increased earning potential and may provide living wages.

In an even more forward-thinking step, the Eastern Shore Community college recently announced its new *CareerStart* program. *CareerStart* is for



individuals interested in a career in health care but who did not graduate from high school and need to earn their GED® credential. The program offers the opportunity to prepare for the GED examination while working through a curriculum which has a strong focus on basic medical vocabulary and the sort of math needed by health care professionals.” This is an example of a community responding to the needs to a growing industry sector and represents the kind of workforce training effort that can be replicated.

The Committee thereby recommends Northampton County seek to engage the appropriate entities, such as collaboration with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to assist in the development of a process to build a bridge between education and economic development. Such an initiative could involve training the younger population for employment in future industries that are not yet fully developed on the Shore. This will result in the overall improvement of the skills set of the local labor pool, even if it results in the initial attrition of the local workforce to other communities in the interim.

Workforce Preparation: Mountain Home High School Career Academies

An attractive labor pool ensures that students enter the workforce with employable skills. One such example is Mountain Home High School in Arkansas. This school has Career Academies whose mission is to “provide students the opportunity to focus on their strengths and interests, exposure to broad career themes within each academy, and a strong connection to other students, staff, and community partners. Ultimately, the mission of Mountain Home High School Career Academies is to enable students to develop and actualize their strengths, and to graduate productive, focused young adults who enter the post-secondary world with a realistic plan for the future.”

Known as the “three academies-in-one”, this nationally recognized public school has an innovative approach in preparing high school students to lead successful productive adult lives. Each academy represents a separate academic discipline utilizing various teaching methods, including the kinesthetic learning of the ACME Academy of Architecture, Construction, Manufacturing and Engineering, the specialized learning style of the CAB Academy of Communications, Arts and Business, and the participatory approach of the HHS Academy of Health and Human Services.

Each academy is fully integrated into the fabric of the local community with mentorship programs, internships, and special events.

If we are to succeed in economic development, we must provide tomorrow’s workforce with the skills to be employable for today’s jobs.



Industry Sector Development Walla Walla, Washington

Long recognized as one of the most “fertile agricultural areas in the nation, producing such crops as wheat, asparagus, strawberries and the famous Walla Walla Sweet Onions”, Walla Walla Washington is today recognized more for its world class wines than it is for its onions. The story of Walla Walla is most inspiring because, like the Eastern Shore, it was once a community in economic transition from the traditional agricultural model to the time where it now celebrates more than 100 wineries of all varieties. It also is appealing because of the sustainable development potential of the winemaking industry.

Walla Walla Wine is a community effort that involves multiple towns, local schools, businesses as well as the community college system. All work collaboratively to use their natural environment, resources, and people to prepare the workforce, equip entrepreneurs, and build an industry sector. Innovation in the viticulture industry has spawned ancillary development opportunities in eco-industry, alternative energy, wind turbines, agriculture, hospitality, and tourism for the area. Due to the burgeoning wine industry, Walla Walla has experienced a most impressive population and revenue boom over the past decade with a nearly twenty-percent increase in population in little more than a decade.

A report by PBS on the success of the Walla Walla initiative can be found on the PBS web site at: <http://video.pbs.org/video/2277619791/>. Readers are encouraged to study the PBS video carefully for many examples of ideas and concepts that can also be implemented in Northampton County.



**Summary of Presentation by District 4 Supervisor Spencer Murray to the
Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee
September 19, 2011**

(All quotes following attributed to Spencer Murray – all text approved by Spencer Murray)

Adopted By CPAC as a formal working document of fact finding

“Northampton County has a Revenue Problem, not an expense control problem. Expenses are not out of control, and the county is efficiently run”.

The county has \$48 million in total debt, and an annual operating budget of \$42 million, of which approximately one half is raised locally. Debt service is over \$4.0 million annually.

“We are by necessity a cash and carry community; we cannot take on any more debt until current debt levels are reduced significantly, so all of our funds must come from sources of income.”

The bulk of the county’s income comes from General Property taxes of fifteen million three hundred thirty one thousand dollars and from other local taxes totaling three million eighty one thousand dollars in revenues, for a total of \$18,413,183. The total general fund revenues are \$22,910,375 annually.

The Northampton County per student cost of education is approximately \$11,000 per year. The local share is over \$8.0 million, roughly equal to or in excess of the State funding, depending on the fluctuations of the Local Composite Index, (LCI).

This is the background information necessary to generally understand the county’s finances and economic needs.

“Faced with many opportunities, capitol investment will flow to where it is welcomed. The first place it (the financial investor) looks to assess whether or not it is welcomed is the county Comprehensive plan and Zoning Ordinances. Prior to ZO passage, I was concerned that extensive use of the word “existing” business and the lack of a primary commercial zoning district did not represent an attractive welcome mat. I fought for the Primary Commercial Zone to be included; however, a very limited amount of land was included in the Future Land Use Map”.

The economic analysis shows that without managed commercial growth in and around the towns and on route 13 with proper limited access and buffering, the county may not have

sufficient revenue growth to meet even inflationary needs. The civilian labor force has declined over the last five years, despite national economic growth.”

“To deny the revenue possibilities associated with managed commercial growth is to strangle the county’s future and further transfer the tax burden to personal property and real estate, a trend that has increased from 64% of revenues to 79% of revenues since the year 2000. This Inconvenient truth must be acknowledged. Counties, like corporations, stagnate and die when they fail to innovate and grow, losing market share and an economic reason to exist.”

“We simply cannot encourage farmers and watermen to provide year round employment with benefits and living wages when their costs are rising and their prices are falling. I have no idea what these incentives would be or how the county can afford them, but we must avoid unrealistic notions and empty words. Our challenges are real.” We get no tax income from agricultural products such as soy beans and tomatoes. There are revenues from sales tax, machinery/equipment etc. but a relatively small portion overall. The same applies to aquaculture products, which, by the way, depend on clean water and sound farming practices. Our support for agriculture and open land is shown through approval of AFDs and Purchase of Development Rights programs.

“A sensible and safe use of the route 13 corridor is necessary for commercial growth. Lankford Highway is a Linear City that we must utilize to generate revenue for the county budget. We need to create new light commercial businesses with 10 to 50 jobs per business in the short term as our most realistic approach to this end.”

“The content of the last comprehensive plan was driven by fear of uncontrolled growth, unsafe highway conditions, and the possibility that an interstate highway bypass would be built on the seaside to compensate for the traffic jams on route 13.”

The 2004 board mandate - very vocally stated by the 2004 board, was to reduce growth and density, and substantially limit development on route 13. This was the board policy that drove the process and determined the outcome of the contents of the comprehensive plan that we have today. Fear of becoming a bedroom community and the elimination of the CBBT toll drove much of the dialogue.

We need to pop some of the myths on which our comprehensive plan is founded on in order to develop a plan that creates a positive net growth for the county.

Persistent Rural Poverty on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

By: Roberta A. Kellam

June 21, 2009

Draft for Discussion

To watch the latest YouTube promotional video about the Eastern Shore of Virginia, one would not suspect that Northampton County is identified as one of only two “persistent poverty” counties in Virginia by the United States Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service (USDA ERS), or that nearly 17% of the residents of Accomack County live below poverty level, according to 2007 United States Census Bureau data. (See, www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9mPoCftd6E, www.ers.usda.gov/Data/TypologyCodes/2004/all_final_codes). Statistics, despite their limitations, paint a picture of the Eastern Shore of Virginia that more closely resembles life in the Great Depression, rather than the idyllic, carefree, coastal paradise that realtors and developers would hope to present. Strategies to address poverty have thus far been piecemeal – housing, workforce training, and healthcare – but no comprehensive plan for raising the population out of poverty has thus far been proposed. In order to develop a comprehensive strategy to address poverty, both the demographic characteristics of the poor community and the emerging population and poverty trends in the Eastern Shore as a whole must be analyzed. The statistics described below show that very little progress has been made in reducing overall poverty rates in either county over the past 10 years, and an increasing proportion and number of Hispanic residents are coming to the Eastern Shore and living in poverty.

“Place matters” in the study of poverty, says the Rural Policy Research Institute of the University of Missouri-Columbia. Rural Americans have a higher poverty rate (14%) than urban Americans (11%). (United States Census Bureau, 2004.) Factors such as limited access to health care, limited access to resources, transportation limitations, lack of capacity in local governments and local non-profit agencies, and social isolation, can increase the challenges to the rural poor. Rural communities generally have a greater percentage of disabled population. Children are particularly disadvantaged. The 2003 National Survey of Children’s Health, for example, showed that children in rural areas have higher rates of obesity, injury and mortality than children in metropolitan areas. (See, www.mchb.hrsa.gov/ruralhealth/index.htm.) Poverty rates for children under age 18 are much higher in rural areas than for urban areas – 19.8% vs. 16%. (United States Census Bureau, 2002.)

Both Northampton and Accomack counties (outside of Chincoteague) are classified as rural under the United States Census Bureau methodology. The Census Bureau measures rurality based upon population numbers for a given census tract, whether or not incorporated as a town or village. Other governmental agencies such as the Office of Management and Budget and the USDA ERS look at additional factors such as rural-urban commuting, population density and economic integration to broaden the characterization of urban or metropolitan areas and reduce the rural areas. Again, the Eastern Shore retains its designation as “rural” under any more restrictive criteria although Accomack County is slightly less rural than Northampton County on the urban-rural continuum. (See, e.g., “Am I Rural?” at www.raconline.org/funding/rural.php.)

Overall, both Northampton and Accomack Counties made enormous strides in reducing the poverty rates from 1990 to 2000, but remained above the 14% poverty rate for an average rural American location. (See Table 1.) Despite the explosion of residential development in Northampton County during the housing boom of the last decade, the overall poverty rate and number of individuals living in poverty in Northampton County has increased since the 2000 census, according to the most recent estimates of the U.S. Census Bureau, rising to over 20% of the population. Periodic estimates throughout the decade show that the poverty rate has not ever been far below this level, although better times were seen in 2003, when the rate was 18.1%, and 2006, when the rate was 18.9%. Nor does Accomack County appear to have made very much progress in reducing the overall poverty rate since 2000. The drop of 0.3% over the past eight years represents a mere 135 individuals. Further analysis will be required in order to understand how the Eastern Shore managed to lower its poverty rates in the 1990s and how it stagnated in the 2000s.

The Eastern Shore shares many of the characteristics of a typical high-poverty, rural county – high disability rates, disproportionate share of children living in poverty, and a large population over age 65. A review of 2007 US Census Data shows that the United States population as a whole counts 19.3% of the population over age 5 as disabled, while in Northampton County that same cohort is 25.8% of the population. 21.4% of the Accomack County residents over age 5 were counted as disabled. An aging population is also a characteristic that contributes to persistent poverty. Approximately 12.4% of the United States population is over age 65, while 16.7% and 21.2% of the residents in Accomack and Northampton Counties, respectively, are over age 65. Both counties show exceptionally high rates of children under age 18 living in poverty – with 31.5% of the children in Northampton County and 25.1% of the children in Accomack County living in poverty, in contrast to the United States Census Bureau count of 18% for the United States as a whole in 2007. Living situations clearly contribute to poverty status: in Northampton County, 49% of the single woman, head of household families live below poverty level, and in Accomack County, 40.7% of the families led by an unmarried woman live below the poverty level.

Table 1: Poverty Statistics (Source: United States Census Bureau, nondecennial measurements are estimates.)

	Northampton County			Accomack County		
	<i>2007/2008</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1989/1990</i>	<i>2007/2008</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1989/90</i>
Population	13,415	13,093	13,061	38,180	38,305	31,703
Poverty (percent)	20.8%	18.6%	31.4%	16.8%	17.1%	23.4%
Poverty (number of individuals)	2,790	2,435	4,101	6,414	6,549	7,400

“Race matters,” also, when it comes to poverty. Minority groups in rural areas suffer from higher poverty rates than their urban counterparts. The rural African-American community averages a 33% poverty rate while the urban African-American community averages a 22% poverty rate nationwide. The Hispanic population shows similar trends, with 26.7% of the rural Hispanic population living in poverty while 21.4% of the urban Hispanic population lives in

poverty. (See, USDA ERS Rural Poverty at a Glance, www.ers.usda.gov/publications/rdr100/rdr100.htm.)

In an article published by the USDA ERS in 2004, Northampton County was classified as “Black High Poverty County” due to the low income of the black residents. (See, Anatomy of Nonmetro High Poverty Areas: Common in Plight, Distinctive in Nature; www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/February04/Features/Anatomy.htm.) A common feature of the Black High Poverty County is a large proportion of children being raised in female, head of household families. Another common feature is lack of automobile ownership.

Using 2000 data, the most recent racial breakdown available, 34.7% of the black population and 40% of the Hispanic population in Northampton County were living below poverty level, while only 7.9% of the white population was so designated. (See Table 2.) 2007 data for Accomack County shows that 9.8% of the white population, 20.9% of the Black/African American residents and 35.9% of the Hispanic population lives below poverty level. Population trends on the Eastern Shore indicate that the Hispanic population is growing while the African-American population is declining, both in percentage and in numbers of individuals. Hispanic population numbers may encompass temporary migrants, unauthorized migrants, or other non-citizens who reside on the Eastern Shore, but there may be uncounted Hispanic residents also. The US Census does not distinguish between citizen and non-citizen residents in the typical census count and does expect that non-citizens, including illegal residents, will be included in the data.

Table 2: Racial Demographics (Source: United States Census Bureau, nondecennial measurements are estimates.)

	Northampton County			Accomack County		
	<i>2007</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1990</i>
Black/African American residents	38.7%	43%	46.2%	29.1%	31.6%	34.5%
Hispanic or Latino residents	6.0%	3.5%	2.0%	8.8%	5.4%	1.4%
White persons not Hispanic	54.6%	53.3%	51.7%	61.0%	63.4%	64.1%

Although efforts to improve living conditions for the poor are advocated by local governments and non-profit groups, and great accomplishments have been achieved in housing, healthcare and education, it is not clear that the Eastern Shore community is unified around a goal of reducing poverty. The Comprehensive Plan for Northampton County, as adopted through October 2008, does not include any goals or strategies that focus on reducing the poverty rate, nor does the current Accomack County Comprehensive Plan mention the high poverty rate as an issue of concern. Both counties have plans related specifically to economic development, housing, transportation, and other matters that impact the community as a whole, and that may, in fact, have very positive results in improving the well-being of those living in poverty.

If a comprehensive Eastern Shore poverty reduction strategy were to be developed, it should build upon the existing strategies for economic development, housing, transportation, healthcare, land use, workforce development and education, but should also consider other factors such as institutional support systems and civic engagement. A recent article by A.

Rupasingha and S. Goetz suggests that strategies to reduce poverty must take the local political and social context into account. (See, RUPRI, Perspectives, Vol. 4/No. 3, 2007.) In comparing the changes in poverty level with the characteristics of poor rural and metropolitan counties, the authors determined that the political and social structure had a greater impact on the poverty rate in rural areas than it had in urban areas. “Social capital is clearly important in lowering poverty in rural communities. Communities that have solid participation in associations and networks do better.” Ethnic and income polarization may be both a cause and an effect of rural poverty, but the authors suggest that strategies to reduce poverty should include efforts to increase inclusiveness in the political process and social framework. Economic forces, both local and national, are also important in rural poverty. One clear strategy for reducing poverty in both rural and urban areas is the existence of an entrepreneur and self-employed class. Entrepreneurship lowers poverty levels, whereas less diversified local economies increase the risk for poverty. The authors recommend building programs and networks to support entrepreneurs as an integral part of improving rural economies.

The high poverty rates on the Eastern Shore impact the ability of the local government to provide necessary services. The number of children living in poverty places a great strain on the local school system. Given the sustained, generational nature of the poverty population on the Eastern Shore, perhaps it is time to focus on additional strategies that have proven successful in other areas of the United States.

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee

Dr. Richard L. Drury is a retired college professor. He is a member of the Northampton County School Board, serving as Chair of the Board and the Strategic Planning Committee. He is a member of the Eastern Shore Community College Board, former Chair of the Educational Advisory Council for WHRO Public Radio and Television (Hampton Roads, Virginia), a former member of its Governing Board and WHRO Strategic Planning Committee. Additionally, he is a founder, former President and Chair of the Northampton County Education Foundation.

Bill Payne After Graduating from the Illinois Institute of Technology with a bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering was hired by International Business Machines, or IBM. He served as an artillery officer in the Illinois National Guard and earned a masters degree in Business Administration from the University of Chicago. After 42 years with IBM, Bill retired and in 2006 moved to Cape Charles. Currently, as owner of Practical Business Solutions he consults with small business owners helping them identify and achieve their personal and business goals.

Patrick Coady Retired. Former Director of Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority. Lifelong entrepreneur with experience in ten startups. Currently residing on Wilsonia Neck in Machipongo.

David Long A member of a farming family that goes back 5 generations. After graduating from college in 1975, he returned to Northampton and started Long Grain & Livestock company. He was appointed to Virginia Irish Potato board by the governor in 1994, and is also serving on the Virginia Cotton Board.

Charles Bell Retired after 32 years as an educator, primarily high school biology. He served 3 terms as a member of the Northampton County Board of Supervisors and is a member of the first Baptist church of Capeville. He lives in Machipongo

Peter Lawrence Peter has spent over 25 years in sales, marketing, lead generation and public relations. This has included work in both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Peter has also been involved in several political campaigns as both a fundraiser and manager. He started his own consulting business in 2000 and continues to work with a variety of clients focusing on lead generation and marketing. Peter has a BA in business administration from Georgetown University.

Billy Moore born and raised on the Shore, educated in Northampton County Public Schools, graduated NHS 1992. Earned BS from Old Dominion University in 1996, returned to work in family businesses. Elected to Exmore Town Council in 2006, elected Mayor 2010. Currently

employed as construction Manager for Branscome Eastern Shore and co-owner of Moore's Towing and Repair, Inc. in Exmore. He also Serves on Shore Bank advisory board for NHCO, Board of directors, and the Eastern Shore Railroad.

Roland "Butch" Bailey An Eastern Shore native and graduate of Northampton High School and A & T State University of Greensboro NC. Taught Vocational Education for 12 years in the school system and auto repair at the community college for 7 years. Has been the owner of an auto repair business in Belle Haven/Exmore for the past 27 years.

William C. "Bill" Parr, Committee Chairman A Virginia Native and Eastern Shore Real Estate Broker since 1983, serving as President of the Eastern Shore Association of Realtors in 1993 and 2011. Parr served on several boards of directors, including The Virginia Association of Realtors state board, Blue Crab Bay Company, founding director at Transforming Technologies/Privaris Inc, and served as a founding member of the Barrier Islands Center board for its first 7 years. He is currently serving on the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Northampton County and its Incorporated towns. Parr is a land use and business consultant, and President and principal broker of Parr Properties Inc of Cape Charles. He lives in Seaview.

Ava Gabrielle-Wise, advisor to the committee. Ava Gabrielle-Wise has more than 20 years of experience in real estate, community and economic development. She served in the lead position to develop the New Road community of Exmore in 1992 in her capacity as the community development coordinator of the Virginia Eastern Shore Economic Empowerment & Housing Corporation. She has conducted significant economic development analysis on a national level working with national, regional and state authorities resulting in legislative economic development initiatives. In 2009, she founded the United States Sustainable Development Corporation whose mission it is to develop sustainable community and economic development initiatives for depressed communities.

The Committee is supported in its work by county staff Sandra Benson-Thornton and Peter Stith, and Kay Downing one of whom attends every meeting.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Katie H. Nunez, County Administrator
DATE: November 21, 2011
RE: Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee – Revised Guidance

At your meeting on September 26, 2011, the Board voted on the following guidance and direction for the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC):

The primary goal of the Committee is the creation of an Economic Development Plan as referenced in Section 3.5.5 of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The Committee's secondary goal is to serve in a review function for the whole Plan.

At your meeting on November 7, 2011, the Board received a request to amend the guidance and direction for the CPAC. Feedback from the Committee indicates that they did not wholly agree with the prior guidance and direction from the Board. Members of the Board deferred action on this matter until staff review could occur and a recommendation forwarded for the Board's consideration.

I have reviewed the Board of Supervisors Manual that outlines the provisions regarding Ad Hoc Committees and it states that "ad hoc committees are established for the purpose of gathering information and assisting the rest of the Board members in decision-making" and the purpose of an ad hoc committee is to "develop greater expertise and more widespread participation than might otherwise be available." The Board Member manual states that each ad hoc committee will be given a written charge, which shall include the work to be undertaken, the time in which it is to be accomplished, and the procedures for reporting to the Board.

I would recommend the Board of Supervisors expand the composition of the CPAC to be more expansive and reflective of the county population and to serve as the sounding board for the proposed revisions of the Comprehensive Plan prior to the formal public hearing process. I would propose the Board consider representation from the following community segments: Banking, Housing, Builders' Association, Medical Community, Agriculture, Aquaculture, Community College, Bayview Citizens for Social Justice and the New Roads Community Development, Working Watermen's Association, Nature Conservancy, NAACP, Student Representation, and representatives from each of the towns.

After discussion with Director of Planning & Zoning Sandra Benson, I present the following proposed written charge for the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee:

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) is hereby established as an Ad hoc committee of the Board of Supervisors for the purposes of assisting in the review of the County Comprehensive Plan.
2. The CPAC shall report no less than quarterly to the Board of Supervisors through a written report to be submitted as part of the Planning & Zoning Director's Report to the Board of Supervisors. At the completion of their work which shall be defined as the completion of each element contained in this charge, the CPAC will make a formal presentation of their findings at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors.
3. The CPAC shall examine existing Industrial, Commercial and Business zoning districts and analyze the setbacks, height and density requirements, use requirements, signage, and parking and lighting requirements in these zoning districts to determine if they conflict with the Comprehensive Plan or if changes should be proposed to the Comprehensive Plan to address any of these elements to ensure that the existing Industrial, Commercial and Business zoning districts are structured in a manner to promote economic development in these locations.
4. The CPAC shall examine the zoning of the incorporated towns relative to Industrial, Commercial, and Business zones to determine if they comport with the County Comprehensive Plan, which encourages new development to occur in and around the towns to encourage their economic vitality and to integrate existing infrastructure, including water and sewer, for use by new development. This examination shall include an assessment of the adequacy of existing infrastructure to support the growth contemplated by the County Comprehensive Plan.
5. The CPAC shall study if expansion of the existing Industrial, Commercial and Business zoning districts is warranted as well as determine whether new areas within the county should be considered for rezoning to an Industrial, Commercial or Business zoning district and develop recommendations for the Board of Supervisors.
6. THE CPAC shall develop an Economic Development Plan as referenced in Section 3.5.5 of the County's Comprehensive Plan.
7. The CPAC shall review the work of the Planning Commission as it is issued relative to the Comprehensive Plan but prior to the Planning Commission's formal public hearing process for review and consideration of the Comprehensive Plan and provide recommendations for the Planning Commission's consideration as well provide same to the Board of Supervisors as detailed in Item #2 above.

**Changed Circumstances
2012 Comprehensive Plan Review**

Encouraging

Unfavorable

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadband • Federal Investments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1—Wallops facilities 2—Cape Charles wastewater plant— for town and surrounding area 3—Rural Health facilities • Tourism \$\$\$ up, largest increase in the state, up 11.9%, 2010 • State Tourism up 8%, 2012— <i>Governor to increase state tourism investment</i> • Visitor’s Center at CBBT • County awarded Viticulture Region designation by State • STAR Transit equipment upgrades • Resort rentals increase in Cape Charles • Cape Charles marina greatly expanded • Cape Charles: significant increase in tourism-generated tax revenue 2009-12 • County entrepreneurs consistent winners of Small Business awards • Creation of county Economic Development Dept./Director • Publication of “Starting A Business in Northampton County” • County debt refinanced--\$\$ savings • County designated “Below Avg” Fiscal Stress-revenue production <i>(VA Comm. On Local Govt. FY2010)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stagnant national economy impacts county • US housing market collapses • Dramatic decline in many home values in county • Continuing foreclosures—<i>houses, lots, subdivisions</i> • 20% of housing is vacant • Hospital will leave county • No Emergency Room facilities • HUB designation removed by Federal govt. <i>(Historically Underutilized Business Zone)</i> • Schools failed to meet AYP---state mandates changes • Decrease in VDOT funds for new projects and 6-Year Plans <i>(could affect Bayshore Concrete)</i> • Highway business storefronts empty • Unemployment rate up • Disconnect between workforce skills and available jobs • Increase in single-mother births <i>(3 times the state average-- county is #4 in state)</i> • Increase in poverty ---<i>among single-woman head-of-household, no HS or GED head-of-household, and among elderly</i> • High delinquent tax rate
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Encouraging

Unfavorable

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aquaculture expanding—<i>oyster production up 38%, 2010-11 (VIMS)</i>• #1 VA county - value of agri. products, including nursery crops (<i>2007 Agri. Census</i>)• New hospitality businesses—<i>Exmore & Cape Charles</i>• Increased entrepreneurial activity—<i>home businesses/ offices/consulting</i>• Universal Pre-K program• Increased recreational programs• Bike path created in lower county• 2,402 acres now in Enterprise Zone• Increased use of Historic Tax Credits for reuse of existing structures• Increase in community asset based businesses—<i>aquaculture, tourism, specialty food products, niche farming</i>• Vacancies now available in low-income and elderly subsidized housing• BPOL identifies over 800+ (<i>and counting</i>) entities that do business in the county,• Software identifies and maps:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Available <u>Industrial</u> parcels—406.99 acres,-5 acres + eachb) Available <u>Commercial</u> parcels—229.1 acres -3 acres + each (<i>157.17 acres on Rt. 13</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$5 million dollar annual county debt payment—<i>1/3 of local tax revenue collected for debt service</i>• Continued poor health outcomes of residents:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>1—5th highest cancer rate in state</i><i>2—diabetes and obesity rates among highest in the state</i><i>3—38.9% increase in STDs in past 2 yrs—one of the highest rates in the state</i>• Loss of successful Tourism Director• 9,000 undeveloped, platted parcels, in county and towns• Decline in building permits• Employers report major problem --- drugs in the workplace• Shortage of trained, qualified health care workers, nursing staff and therapists of all kinds• Concern about hiring/retaining teachers in the public schools• Shortage of trained IT professionals (<i>Comm. College reports that of 140 graduates, only 3 were IT candidates</i>)• Continued reliance on imported trained workers—<i>health care, education, IT, science and research</i>• Declining private capital investment for non-residential development• Large banks reportedly withdrawing from rural areas• Difficult to obtain home loans• Very difficult to get business loans
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Encouraging

Unfavorable

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Other

- Median age increased to 45.4 years --one of the highest in the Commonwealth (*median age 2000-42.4 yrs*)
- Over-50 population increases
- 10-yr. population decline of 5.4% --both by Natural Increase/Decrease and In-Out Migration (*of all US counties with population loss, 85% were rural*)
- 7 out of 10 Virginians now live in Northern VA, Richmond or Tidewater cities
- Decrease in Black population –down 20%
- Increase in young Hispanic families
- Household income from Federal transfer payments increases 2% (*might reflect more retirees*)
- Middle School closed
- County in state **top 10%** for \$\$\$s spent per student in public schools
- County in **bottom 10%** for high school graduation rate in public schools
- Private schools in county now number 4
- Many tomato growers have left the county

Reference List

CPAC Survey hyperlink:

<http://www.co.northampton.va.us/departments/pdf/CPACSurveyResults.pdf>

A-NPDC CEDS hyperlink:

<http://anpdc.esva.net/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/CEDSFINAL2012.pdf>

2009 Cost of Land Uses Study hyperlink:

http://www.co.northampton.va.us/departments/pdf/tcolu_study.pdf

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