

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY



5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2018

Adopted by the Board of Supervisors on April 8, 2014.

Updated Status Reports as of 1/23/2015 – Katie H. Nunez, County Administrator

With Modifications as made by the Board on February 23, 2015

BACKGROUND and PROCESS:

Strategic planning in local government involves a structured, analytical approach to setting goals, defining objectives and strategically pursuing actions in furtherance of a shared community vision. Strategic planning extends beyond arbitrary administrative boundaries and traditional thinking. Strategic planning is often defined as “a disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it.” The intent of a strategic retreat composed of the elected leadership of the community and the appointed department heads was to establish long-range goals, annual objectives and detailed strategies to address issues relating to performance, productivity and general improvement of the well-being of the community and work force.

The Northampton County Board of Supervisors conducted a strategic retreat at the County’s Emergency Operations Center on Saturday, March 10, 2012, facilitated by Eddie Swain, Dean of Workforce Development at the Eastern Shore Community College. The session focused on the following:

- Review of the existing Vision and Mission Statement
- Identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the County
- Development of 4 Major Strategic Goals to achieve the vision and mission statement of the County.

The department heads and constitutional officers participated with the Board in the review of the Vision and Mission Statement and the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats Assessment (SWOT Review). The SWOT Review is attached to this Strategic Plan.

With the establishment of the 4 major strategic goals, the Board directed the County Administrator to develop 3 to 4 major objectives to bring the strategic goal to fruition and to develop specific strategies & tasks for each major objective that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Reach (just out of), and Time bound (SMART) to serve as the plan to move the goal into reality.

This work resulted in the adoption of the County’s Five-Year Strategic Plan 2012 – 2016.

Then, on February 22, 2014, the Board of Supervisors conducted a half-day retreat to review and update the 5-Year Strategic Plan, confirming the vision and mission and providing revisions to the strategies for each identified goal.

VISION and MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Northampton County Government is to provide the necessary services to protect the health, safety, welfare, environment and quality of life of our citizens consistent with the communities' values and priorities. This mission is accomplished by encouraging citizen involvement, by preserving the County's fiscal stability, traditional values and unity of our people through the implementation of effective and efficient government programs; consensus building; managing the County's natural, cultural, and historic resources; planning for the future; and representing citizen needs and desires to other levels of government.

STRATEGIC GOALS

- I. EDUCATION – Facilitate the development of a quality educational environment that provides for high-quality educational and job readiness skills all County residents
- II. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – Create an environment where businesses are welcome and services are available to help them be prosperous.
- III. INFRASTRUCTURE – Develop an infrastructure system that improves our quality of life.
- IV. HEALTH CARE – Provide Emergency Medical Services and encourage and support adequate health care facilities, services and coverage for all citizens of the County, to the extent possible.

GOAL #1 – EDUCATION

Facilitate the development of a quality educational environment that provides for high-quality educational and job readiness skills for all County residents

OBJECTIVE #1: Develop **on-going** mutually agreeable goals with the School Board ~~by June 30, 2014.~~

STRATEGIES

- A. Support prevention and early intervention programs for children and youth most at risk.
- B. **Continue to** implement universal pre-K program. – **IMPLEMENTED IN 2013/2014 SCHOOL YEAR.**
- C. Increase communication with the School Board on matters of importance to the community, including the following: **The Superintendent provides quarterly status reports to the Board of Supervisors.**
 - (a) Increase graduation rates across demographic categories. **For 2014, the District achieved a graduation rate of 85 which meets the state benchmark.**
 - (b) Obtain accreditation for each school within the School District. **For 2014, the High School is fully accredited; Occohannock Elementary School and Northampton Middle School is accredited with warning; Kiptopeke Elementary School is Accreditation Denied.**
 - (c) Develop a mutually acceptable Capital Plan for the School District. **The Board of Supervisors is exploring the financing options for a high school construction project of \$35 million with a potential start in Fiscal Year 2018.**
 - (d) Develop frequent and ongoing status reports on the approved capital projects, including reports on the conditions of the school facilities. **School Administration is providing updates on ongoing capital projects as part of the Superintendent’s quarterly status report and attended the December 2014 meeting to apprise the Board of an urgent capital repair need at the high school with initial funding released for engineering & some initial stabilization work.**
- D. Secure agreements between the School Board and the County to share costs and responsibilities where practical and when county cost savings can be realized. The range of programs and services amenable to possible collaboration include the purchase of supplies and equipment, vehicle procurement & maintenance, maintenance of physical plant and building grounds, financial management, personnel systems, insurance, audit services, and information technology services.

OBJECTIVE #2: Develop a funding strategy for mutually-agreeable school capital improvement plan by June 30, 2015.

STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Work with School Board in developing a feasibility study regarding the high school facility, including options for middle school location.B. Develop a comprehensive cost estimate through the feasibility study for the high school and update the existing capital plan for the two elementary schools.C. Utilize services of the county’s financial advisor to provide funding options and timelines to achieve implementation of the school capital improvement plan. The Board of Supervisors is exploring the financing options for a high school construction project of \$35 million with a potential start in Fiscal Year 2018.
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OBJECTIVE #3: Continue funding at or above current per-student levels on an annual basis.

A. Maintain funding at or above current per-student levels, using the Fiscal Year 2013 budget as base.

	FISCAL YEAR 2014 (School Year 2013 – 2014) Enrollment of 1,685	FISCAL YEAR 2015 (School Year 2014 – 2015) Enrollment of 1,651
State Per Pupil Amount	\$5,127	\$5,599
Federal Per Pupil Amount	\$2,457	\$1,024
Local Per Pupil Amount	\$4,847	\$5,111
Total Per Pupil Amount	\$12,431	\$11,734

B. Examine the impact of the Composite Index re-calculation in spring 2013 for impact on Fiscal Year 2014 and Fiscal Year 2015 budgets.

	Composite Index	State Aid for Schools
FY2011	.5109	\$8,364,999
FY2012	.5109	\$8,737,437
FY2013	.4840	\$8,515,020
FY2014	.4840	\$8,494,216
FY2015	.5103	\$8,872,378
FY2016	.5103	

C. Develop a memorandum of understanding with the School Board that stipulates the county’s financial commitment to public education, on a fiscal year basis, that the School Board can rely upon when developing the school budget.

GOAL #2 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create an environment where businesses are welcome and services are available to help them be prosperous.

OBJECTIVE #1: Review and revise the zoning ordinance to promote business development by ~~January~~ August 1, 2015.

STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Complete the Comprehensive Plan Update by January September 1, 2015. The Planning Commission is scheduled to release the draft comprehensive plan in spring 2015.B. Review the zoning ordinance for consistency and compliance with the updated Comprehensive Plan.
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OBJECTIVE #2: Assist and promote the use of the existing ~~Develop an~~ Industrial Park in Cape Charles by June 30, 2017

STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Develop list of available properties that meet the criteria developed by the Board of Supervisors for an industrial park.B. Evaluate and refine the list by ranking properties that are most suitable for development into an industrial park.C. Engage discussions with landowners for acquisition of property.D. Seek and apply for federal and state funds to develop property for industrial park purposes.
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OBJECTIVE #3: Develop Business Incentives that can be provided by the County to stimulate business recruitment, selection, location and development by June 30, ~~2013~~ 2016

STRATEGIES

- A. Develop and propose a Technology Zone for the County which would identify qualifying properties and provide incentives for the location of technology specific businesses within that zone. **Potential incentives for a technology zone were provided to the Board of Supervisors. Input is being sought from the five towns in developing a zone with proposed incentives.**
- B. Develop and propose a Tourism Zone for the County which would identify qualifying properties and provide incentives for the location of tourism specific businesses within that zone. **The concept was discussed with the Board of Supervisors; we are awaiting the ES Tourism Commission to complete their Blue Print and accompanying strategy to serve as a basis for creating and offering the Tourism Zone.**
- C. Review and recommend additional incentives for the Enterprise Zone, relative to permit review and local taxation. **The joint Accomack-Northampton Enterprise Zone has been re-authorized by the Governor for an additional ten year term, plus 2 five-year term renewals.**
- D. Annually review the County's tax structure and analyze its effectiveness and competitiveness with other similarly sized Virginia localities. **The Board appointed an Ad-Hoc Committee to Study the Existing Tax Structure of the County. The Committee delivered its report at the January 13, 2015 meeting.**
- E. **Assist and promote agriculture, aquaculture and tourism.**

GOAL #3 – INFRASTRUCTURE

Develop an infrastructure system that improves our quality of life.

OBJECTIVE #1: Promote broadband availability for business and residential use by June 30, 2017.

STRATEGIES

- A. Engage the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority in developing marketing materials that detail the location of high-speed broadband and the pricing of service.**
- B. Partner with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership in marketing the availability of broadband in the County.**
- C. Work with local internet service providers in removing any barriers (zoning or otherwise) that may impede the offering of broadband to our businesses and residents.**

OBJECTIVE #2: Provide water and sewer to Northern and Southern Nodes of the County in a financially responsible way by June 30, 2017.

STRATEGIES

- A. Support the Public Service Authority with staffing assistance.**
- B. Assist the Public Service Authority in seeking grant funding opportunities for water and sewer system development and construction.**
- C. Examine feasibility of special tax districts to assist in the development of water and sewer infrastructure.**
- D. Participate in outreach to the County residents, businesses and incorporated towns regarding the need, impact and cost of proposed water and sewer systems.**

GOAL #4 – HEALTH CARE

Provide Emergency Medical Services and encourage and support adequate health care facilities, services and coverage for all citizens of the County, to the extent possible.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES & Key Strategies/Tasks

OBJECTIVE # 1: Ensure the County has a 24/7 Emergency care facility located in the County by June 30, 2017.

STRATEGIES

- A. Ascertain final plans from Riverside as to what remaining medical services and facilities will continue to be provided at the Nassawadox campus.
- B. Partner with Eastern Shore Health District and the Accomack-Northampton Planning District to determine what health services need to be solicited to adequately service Northampton County for emergency care.

OBJECTIVE #2: Strongly support EMS services by June 30, 2017.

STRATEGIES

- A. Review and implement the state Fire and EMS Study, commissioned in 2011, as it relates to EMS service.
- B. Complete feasibility study for renovation of former Middle School property as new location for the Northampton EMS Department. **An engineering and architectural options were considered for the renovation of the former Middle School . No option was pursued by the Board at this time. The Board has decided to retain EMS at their existing location in Machipongo and is negotiating the purchase of this property as well as beginning work on providing a garage facility.**
- C. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of the County-operated ambulance in relation to the volunteer ambulance coverage.
- D. Secure formal, written agreements with volunteer fire and rescue stations, including performance standards, to address issues of concern such as timely grant reporting, etc.

OBJECTIVE #3: Partner with Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital for a redevelopment plan for its present facilities ~~by June 30, 2014.~~

STRATEGIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Engage the Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital Board of Directors and Executive Management of Riverside in discussions to determine the scope of the medical services and facilities that will remain in Nassawadox.B. Work with the Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital Board of Directors, the Executive Management of Riverside and the Nassawadox Town Council in identifying re-use possibilities for the property and any facilities that will not have a continued purpose for delivery of medical services.
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ATTACHMENT A

As part of the Board retreat from March 10, 2012, each department was requested to develop and submit 3 to five goals for their departmental functions. These goals were distributed to the Board and are now incorporated by reference as Attachment A to this plan. Included as part of this Attachment A is the update from the departments in implementing and achieving these goals.

ATTACHMENT B
SWOT REVIEW

As part of the initial Board of Supervisors retreat on March 10, 2012, the Board of Supervisors and the Department Heads identified the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the County.

These are defined within the following parameters:

STRENGTHS: Items/Things that are steady/paced, focused, enduring, smart.

WEAKNESSES: Slow, Always Behind

OPPORTUNITIES: Outside perception is vulnerable; patience/time to develop these items

THREATS: Predators; perception

GROUP 1

<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>WEAKNESSES</u>
Rural Appeal	Limited Health Care – Impending move of hospital
Small Size	CBBT – barrier
High Level of education of retirees	Lack of skilled workforce
Strong Government Presence	Lack of public beach access
Route 13 Pass Thru-Traffic	Retiree increase = no kids
Parks & Campgrounds/Golf Courses	Lack of opportunity for local high school or college graduates
Entrepreneurs	Lack of retail
Hunting & Fishing Opportunities	Need destination programs/events for hotels
Large # of undeveloped lots	High unemployment/need livable wage jobs
Seafood industry	Affordable housing is lacking
	School System
	Lack of infrastructure (water & sewer)
	High poverty rate
	# of town governments impediment to unified plan for growth

<u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>	<u>THREATS</u>
<p>Eastern Shore is not the Outer Banks (over-developed/over-crowded) – also absence of hurricanes that tend to impact the Outer Banks.</p> <p>Route 13 – business opportunities</p> <p>Green Energy opportunities</p> <p>Small & Medium Size Business opportunities</p> <p>Richmond has discovered the Shore and is providing assistance</p> <p>Deep water harbor in Cape Charles</p> <p>Ocean Boat Access (Oyster)</p> <p>Proximity to large cities (Norfolk, Baltimore, DC)</p> <p>Improvement by and within Cape Charles</p> <p>Broadband</p> <p>Golf Courses/Bay Creek/Future Recreation Center</p> <p>Rail Traffic increase</p> <p>Wallops Development Spin-Off</p>	<p>Loss of Hospital (largest County employer)</p> <p>Weather – bridge can close at any time; snow shuts down the Eastern Shore</p> <p>CBBT’s own marketing campaign does not align with our need for visitors to stop and explore the Eastern Shore (Bridge markets Rte. 13 as short cut and fastest route to Outer Banks).</p> <p>Geographic location</p> <p>Lack of Regional Partnerships</p> <p>Drawing down on Federal & State Funding</p> <p>Need for reasonable zoning – need to eliminate the “fear of.....” for zoning rationale.</p>

GROUP 2

<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>WEAKNESSES</u>
<p>Transportation is varied (Route 13; water access; railroad availability)</p> <p>Location</p> <p>Recreational opportunities – boating, fishing, golf</p> <p>Beautiful, scenic area</p>	<p>Job Opportunities – loss of skilled workforce; low paying jobs</p> <p>Location – very isolated</p> <p>Infrastructure is lacking – water, wastewater, public transportation</p>

<p>Family oriented lifestyle – very laid back</p> <p>Low crime rate</p> <p>Ecotourism – strong established industry</p> <p>Aquaculture and Agricultural Industries</p> <p>Viewed as retirement area</p>	<p>Lack of educational opportunities</p> <p>Medical services</p> <p>No Economic Growth – not business friendly (regulations)</p> <p>Affordable housing is limited – lacking standard amenities for all houses</p> <p>No indoor recreational services</p> <p>Limited to non-existent shopping</p>
<p><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></p> <p>Board’s Strategic Retreat Meeting with input and discussion with Department Heads</p> <p>Public Service Authority</p> <p>Regional Partnerships – Accomack County Board of Supervisors</p> <p>Route 13</p> <p>Bayshore Concrete</p> <p>Riverside Hospital Emergency Care Facility</p>	<p><u>THREATS</u></p> <p>Weather – Location – Isolation</p> <p>Accomack County – more business friendly; problems in past with regional partnerships</p> <p>Route 13 is corridor – bypass</p> <p>Chesapeake Bay – clean = more regulations</p> <p>“No Growth Crowd” – perception of the county; few landowners for the majority of the land</p> <p>Medical Services – lack of facility</p> <p>State funding – budget cuts; mandates</p>

GROUP 3

<p><u>STRENGTHS</u></p> <p>Unique location – natural beauty</p> <p>Mild climate</p> <p>Relatively low tax rate</p>	<p><u>WEAKNESSES</u></p> <p>Location</p> <p>Lack of qualified workforce</p> <p>Lack of vision for community as a whole</p> <p>Disproportionate influence of special interest</p>
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<p>Relatively relaxed pace of life</p> <p>Strong seafood industry – use of natural resources</p> <p>Quality of natural resources, environment – water; open space</p> <p>Historic resources</p> <p>Abundant fertile farmland</p> <p>Broadband</p> <p>Strong artisan community, active volunteer & civic groups</p> <p>Deep water harbor, marina</p> <p>Recreational opportunities</p> <p>Relatively low crime rate</p>	<p>groups</p> <p>Public school system</p> <p>Lack of critical infrastructure</p> <p>Perception of “not business friendly”</p> <p>High unemployment</p> <p>Lack of diversified employment base</p>
<p><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></p> <p>Capitalize on Route 13 Traffic</p> <p>Attract more retirees</p> <p>Destination Resort (Bay Creek, camping)</p> <p>Location in relation to larger population centers</p> <p>Recruit additional health care</p> <p>Railroad system</p> <p>Synergistic opportunity for water-related research</p>	<p><u>THREATS</u></p> <p>Retirees/groups who don’t want change</p> <p>Well-organized special interest groups</p> <p>Hospital move to Accomack County</p> <p>Shrinking state funding/ state & federal mandates</p> <p>Impacts of belief that county is not business friendly; county has excessive regulations, etc.</p> <p>Vulnerability of infrastructure/ access to major disaster</p> <p>Lack of cooperation with major players (counties, towns)</p> <p>Needs may exceed ability to pay</p>

GROUP 4

<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>WEAKNESSES</u>
<p>Beautiful landscape</p> <p>Infrastructure – County Complex</p> <p>Citizens/History</p> <p>Low Tax rate</p> <p>Small Government/Ready access to Officials</p> <p>Managed Growth</p> <p>Surrounded by water</p> <p>Weather – 4 seasons</p> <p>Wind</p>	<p>Public perception</p> <p>Sustainable Employment Opportunities</p> <p>Isolated location</p> <p>Public Transportation System</p> <p>Lack of Affordable Housing</p> <p>Lack of Medical Facilities</p> <p>Absentee landowners</p> <p>AFD Program</p>
<u>OPPORTUNITIES</u>	<u>THREATS</u>
<p>Route 13</p> <p>Wind</p> <p>Water</p> <p>Potential businesses</p> <p>Professional knowledge of residents</p> <p>Potential destination point</p>	<p>Special Interest groups</p> <p>No Major medical facility</p> <p>Loss of younger population</p> <p>State & Federal Government Regulations & Funding</p> <p>Lack of Majority Representation</p> <p>Accomack County</p>