



MEMORANDUM

To: City Councilors
From: Mayor Joe Peel
Date: February 20, 2014
Re: Findings of Vision 2020 Action Teams

During the Vision 2020 steering committee meetings, which began in October 2013, a SWOT analysis of Elizabeth City's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats was conducted; a vision statement that positions Elizabeth City as the "Harbor of Opportunity," as well as the "Harbor of Hospitality®" was drafted; and nine critical success factors within the areas of economic development and community development were identified to help the area thrive. These included:

Economic Development Success Factors

- Improving K-12 education
- Enhancing the waterfront
- Developing a more vibrant downtown
- Improving the business/developer climate in the city and county by streamlining licensing and startup processes
- Strengthening ties with and building ongoing, positive relationships with state leadership, the Port of Virginia and area economic development efforts

Community Development Success Factors

- Championing the region's diversity and heritage by creating a dynamic partnership among all citizens
- Improving and supporting strong family structures
- Improving day care for infants and children through age 5 and Pre-K opportunities
- Comprehensive job and entrepreneur training for youth

During the January 2013 meeting, the co-chairs called for the formation of "action teams," to be represented by a broad spectrum of residents, for addressing each of the nine critical success factors. The teams, consisting of 10-12 people each, were tasked with developing measurable goals and recommendations for what can be accomplished over the next five-to-seven years in their assigned areas. These teams began their work towards the end of January. They have involved more than 2,300 additional citizens in their work through focus groups, online surveys and face-to-face meetings.

The final recommendations of eight of those nine teams have been submitted. These findings have been published and represent the thinking and desires of a large part of our population.

During our Work Session on Monday, February 20, I will distribute a copy of this final report to each of you and provide an update on the Vision 2020 initiative.

JWP/vdw