

VIRGINIA BEACH VISION PRESENTATION TO CITY COUNCIL
ON THE 2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
December 1, 2009

The city's professional staff, with the input of many citizens, Planning Commissioners, and members of Council, have improved the process, and thus the COMP Plan. As we get closer and closer to the ultimate, we must face the reality that this rapidly changing world will not allow us to create the perfect plan, thus change and flexibility remain the constants.

1. We support "Strong Neighborhoods" because the places we live are the baseline for our City's "quality of life". To that end, Virginia Beach Vision agrees that our actions must sustain strong neighborhoods and revitalize stressed ones in order to maintain our City's health. This by necessity includes nearby and interior office, commercial, and retail areas.

2. Strategic Growth Areas (SGA)/Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) which appeared in the 2003 Plan, are intended to "accommodate and absorb" urban growth.

We agree that the characteristics of mixed-use, high-density residential and complimentary office, retail, and commercial should make up these urban areas. Of note, this urban type of mixed-use development offers as much as 15 times the commercial tax base as the existing uses.

Public investment in infrastructure and other incentives to development will be necessary to stimulate the vision set forth in the COMP and SGA Plans. Thus, a key to the implementation plans for the SGAs needs to be an economic model for each. Further, we endorse the strategic

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use of such tools as TIFs and CDAs to encourage and engage the private sector.

Business relocation assistance, when necessary, must be a guiding principle for the reshaping of the SGAs. Residential components must accommodate a variety of income levels – especially workforce housing. Transportation in the form of road system improvement and maintenance must be continually emphasized and programmed. We strongly endorse light rail from Norfolk to the Oceanfront. We agree that Newtown, Pembroke, and Rosemont SGAs are prime for “intense, mixed-use centers.” Burton Station fits nicely into the “high tech business/commercial uses” and compliments the growth at Little Creek. The Resort Area must grow to accommodate tourism and the urban growth outlined for all the SGAs.

3. The new classification of Suburban Focus Areas (SFA) includes 9 distinctive locations throughout the city. We agree that each area has a unique “character” as a place to live, work, shop, recreate and educate. Replacement, consolidation, stabilization and growth in each area should compliment the existing land uses.

4. The three (3) Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs) positioned around Oceana must include economic growth opportunities for such land uses as institutional, commercial, office, retail, light industrial, and other non- residential, in conformance with the City’s AICUZ provisions.

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5. As stated in the Plan, the Princess Anne Commons/Transition Area remains an important component of the land use strategy of the City.

The western portion of the Transition Area and the North Central Princess Anne Commons make up the Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) between Oceana and Fentress. This area should develop in conformance with the City's AICUZ provisions including office, educational, institutional, commercial, retail, and other AICUZ-compatible uses. Parcel consolidation should be a goal to provide more attractive, well planned, and efficient use of land.

6. The rural southern part of the City should remain focused on agriculture and agribusiness.