



**Comments by President Craig Poppen to  
Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission  
Financial Plan Public Hearing  
November 5, 2014**

I am Craig Poppen and I am speaking today as president of Virginia Beach Vision, Inc., representing 120 executive leaders in Virginia Beach who:

- Support the recommendations of the Finance Committee and the proposed FY 2015 Budget before you today
- Support adoption of the initial financial plan for:
  - improvements to the I-64/I-264 interchange
  - expansion of I-64 on the Peninsula
  - the next planning phase for an expanded High-Rise Bridge
  - next phase of study on for the Third Crossing project

Our elected leaders have laid the taxing and organizational structure to allow Hampton Roads the ability to address its most crippling transportation challenges. Today's projects begin that process but they are just the beginning. Others should follow quickly.

While these first projects will be funded with revenues available through the Hampton Roads Transportation Trust Fund and will not require bond financing, moving forward with other critical regional projects will require that we leverage regional revenues through bonding. Toward this end, we encourage the Commission to:

- Pursue a bond validation lawsuit to gain a Court ruling validating HRTAC's authority to issue debt.

Economic diversification will be critical to the region's future viability. You must use the tools now available to us to:

- Capitalize on one of the region's greatest economic assets, the port.
- To attract business growth and a dynamic workforce
- To support our military assets and readiness

Thank you for your continued efforts.