



## **Arena Development**

Remarks by Hank Boyd

On behalf of Virginia Beach Vision Board of Directors

December 2, 2014

Mr. Mayor, members of City Council, I am Hank Boyd and I am speaking this evening on behalf of Virginia Beach Vision and its 118 business and community leaders. As an organization, Virginia Beach Vision's mission is to create a vision and advance initiatives necessary to the City of Virginia Beach and the Hampton Roads region's future development, prosperity and quality of life.

The siting of a major entertainment and sports arena offers significant opportunities for the city that, if properly structured, could enhance the economic value and desirability of the area. With most of the major entertainment events projected to take place in the off-season months, an arena would be a primary asset in establishing Virginia Beach as a year-round destination. It would allow for the attraction of major concerts and sporting events that no facility in Hampton Roads can currently accommodate and it would stimulate business development and activity particularly in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> street corridors. Coupled with the Virginia Beach Convention Center, Virginia Beach would have the meeting facilities to host major national and international conferences and events.

Because of the potential opportunities an arena complex would offer, Virginia Beach Vision encourages City Council's approval of a non-binding term sheet that will allow the City and USM to enter into financial planning and comprehensive development agreement discussions for later City Council consideration.

As project planning continues, it is recommended that particular attention be paid to a facility parking strategy, the project's impact on the city's bond limit and AAA rating and on event coordination between the convention center and the arena. These and other key issues must be fully vetted before the project can move to final approval. The non-binding term sheet will set into motion the more detailed planning that will ultimately determine the arena's viability.