

# City of Suffolk Virginia



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# City of Suffolk Virginia

Development Concepts for the Tidewater Community College Real Estate  
Foundation and Suffolk Economic Development Authority Sites

February 20–25, 2011  
An Advisory Services Program Report

Urban Land Institute  
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# About the Urban Land Institute

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**T**he mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has nearly 30,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academicians, students, and librarians.

ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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# About ULI Advisory Services

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The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 400 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; hour-long interviews of key community representatives; and a day of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academicians, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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# Acknowledgments

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The panel would especially like to recognize Suffolk City Department of Economic Development's Kevin Hughes, Greg Byrd, Deanna Holt, and Jennifer Schmack and Tidewater Community College Real Estate Foundation's David Harnage. The briefing materials, tours, interviews, and access to all of the stakeholders would not have been possible without their efforts.

Finally, the panel would like to acknowledge and thank ULI Hampton Roads District Council chair, John Peterson, III. Peterson and his leadership team were instrumental in bringing the ULI panel to Suffolk. Nearly 200 local ULI members can provide the city of Suffolk with access to the same broad and deep land use experience and expertise as the panel, 365 days a year, here in the Hampton Roads area.

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# Foreword: The Panel's Assignment

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The city of Suffolk is located in the Hampton Roads area of southeastern Virginia. In a consolidation of Suffolk, Holland, and Whaleyville with the former Nansemond County, present-day Suffolk was created in 1974—making the new municipality 430 square miles, Virginia's largest city in land area. With a population of approximately 85,000, the city stretches from the James River on the north to the North Carolina border on the south. It is bordered on the east by the cities of Portsmouth and Chesapeake and on the west by Isle of Wight County. Similar to other countylike cities in southeastern Virginia, it has a large size and relatively low population density.

A primary access into the city is the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel across Hampton Roads between Newport News and the city of Suffolk. Opened in 1992, the bridge-tunnel provided a third crossing from the Virginia Peninsula to the Southside in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Located on either side of the bridge landing in Suffolk is the 444-acre site that is the subject of this Advisory Services Panel report.

## Site History

The subject site is located in the northernmost portion of the city adjacent to the James and Nansemond rivers. The Confederate States of America maintained an artillery battery referred to as "Pig Point" on the property during the Civil War to protect the entrance to the Nansemond River.

The property was obtained by the U.S. Department of the Army between 1917 and 1929 and was known as Pig Point Ordnance Depot. During World War I, the facility was used for munitions storage, shipment, classification, and destruction. In 1929, the name of the facility was changed to the Nansemond Ordnance Depot. As was typical with ordnance facilities, portions of the site have been contaminated, or contain possible munitions, or both. The Department of Defense, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Suffolk Economic Development Authority (EDA), the city,

Tidewater Community College Real Estate Foundation (TCCREF), and other federal and state agencies have been involved in the ongoing evaluation and remediation of the site.

In the 1950s, most of the property was conveyed to the Beazley Foundation Boys Academy, which operated a private military academy there until 1968. The Beazley Foundation conveyed portions of the site to Virginia Electric Power Company in 1960, to General Electric (GE) Company in 1965, and to the former county of Nansemond for road right-of-way in 1966. In 1968, the Beazley Foundation ceased operations and donated the remaining property to the Virginia Department of Community Colleges. The main campus for the TCCREF originally opened on the site in 1968 but has since relocated to the city of Portsmouth. The TCCREF's Regional Workforce Development Center and its Truck Driving Training program continue to operate on the site. Other portions of the site were conveyed to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District for use as a treatment facility, and another portion was conveyed for the construction of Interstate 664. A 55-acre portion was sold to the Suffolk EDA.

A 1942 aerial photo of the Nansemond Ordnance Depot shows the former extent of development on the site.



## The Panel's Assignment

At the request of the city and the TCCREF, the Urban Land Institute was asked to provide recommendations on the economic development and redevelopment opportunities for the site. The scope of the panel's work centered on the following areas of inquiry:



A current aerial photo illustrating the site's proximity to Hampton Roads and excellent access from I-664.

- Examine and identify strategies and mix that provide the best near- and long-term development opportunities;
- Recommend development strategies that provide maximum financial benefit to the current land-owners;
- Develop recommendations that consider the waterfront area and how it can be a unique asset that positively enhances development opportunities;
- Examine and identify methods to mitigate the former ordnance depot sites to encourage development;
- Recommend the top-five priority opportunities for the TCCREF site and the Suffolk EDA site, including recommended action plans with time frames for each site; and
- Identify marketing strategies for the recommended development plan that will encourage interest from both local and national developers.

Much about the future, particularly when measured over the next 20 to 30 years, is speculative at best. However, from looking back at the last ten to 20 years and a review of projections, the panel quickly came to the conclusion that population and employment growth are likely certain to continue in the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The area's physical and strategic proximity to the key sustainable



The ULI panel touring the waterfront on the Tidewater Community College Real Estate Foundation site.

economic drivers of Washington, D.C., military facilities, and one the East Coast's largest port complexes leaves the panel with little doubt regarding the direction of the area's growth curves. Matching demographics, the physical pattern of growth, and the land available to accommodate such growth suggests a host of land uses that could be successfully accommodated on this site. Many of these opportunities are already familiar to the area's stakeholders; others will require some imagination and aggressiveness to help nurture, grow, and find a home in this area.

It is no secret that the past several years leave one asking if those projected opportunities will become reality and, if so, when. Although no one can be certain of the timing, as land use professionals, the panel members know that to capture and optimize those opportunities, careful and thoughtful planning and preparation is an essential and indispensable component of the process. "Waiting for someone to come knocking" and "build it and they will come" are generally not guiding principles for opportunity capture or responsible and sustainable physical development of a community. The combination of current and near-term market conditions points to a Suffolk market with an extensive supply of land and improvements, well-positioned to rapidly capture opportunities that appear over the next five to seven years. That is good for the Suffolk market—but not so good for the specific site in the near term. However, the good news is that the panel found this to be an incomparable site, and the time and the resources exist to properly plan and prepare for linking those longer-term opportunities to the site.

## Summary of Recommendations

Following an intense week of interviews, site tours, and discussion, the panel recognized significant opportunity for the city of Suffolk to steer redevelopment of the site. The recommendations set forth here were formulated to create options for a mixed-use redevelopment program appropriate within the context of the city, the neighborhoods surrounding the region, and the existing business climate.

These recommendations do not leave the city with a site that is rigidly locked into a single vision and plan, incapable of responding to the typical dynamic forces of population and job growth when viewed over a 20- to 30-year horizon. Summarized below, these



recommendations are described in more detail later in this report:

- *Brand the site.* For the purposes of this project and this study, the ULI panel chose to refer to the TCCREF and EDA sites as "Confluence Point," recognizing that it represents both a physical and a collaborative coming together of market forces, along with the community vision.
- *As market forces permit, create a large-scale, mixed-use redevelopment program that provides for a variety of land use alternatives.* Ensure that each alternative includes a common development framework, albeit with an emphasis on different land uses.
- *Identify public realm improvements that give the location a particular and recognizable identity* including a "community spine" that acts as the site's central organizing feature, a promenade along the river shorelines with a *Monitor/Merrimack* feature, and community space interspersed throughout the development.
- *Prepare the EDA site* so that it is "shovel-ready."
- *Prepare an operating agreement* that allows the sites to develop as if under one ownership, hire a development manager, and prepare a timeline.
- *Be patient* while being persistent.

The TCCREF and Suffolk EDA sites can be redeveloped into a large-scale, mixed-use community that takes advantage of its premier visual setting on the waterfront and its excellent access from I-664.

# Market Potential

Understanding socioeconomic trends affecting the study area helps establish the opportunities and constraints for future land uses at the subject site. For the purposes of understanding these trends, the panel has used data available for the Hampton Roads MSA, which comprises 16 municipal jurisdictions.

## Employment, Population, and Household Trends

The city of Suffolk is located within the Hampton Roads MSA. This region today includes 1,790,900 people living in 667,300 households, of whom 1,031,800 are civilian employees and 116,700 are employed as active-duty military personnel. Since 1980, civilian job growth has been strong, with 12,300 new jobs per year. During the last decade, this number has declined to 7,800, and active-duty military employment has declined annually by 1,730. Health care and social assistance jobs have accounted for 34 percent of the new civilian jobs during the last decade, with real estate rental and leasing at 28 percent, technical services at 20 percent, and accommodations and food service at 17 percent. Civilian employment in the Hampton Roads MSA declined by 18,400 jobs in 2009 and by 1,700 jobs in 2010. Projections of civilian em-

ployment growth suggest that during the next two years, as the effects of the 2008 recession subside, the Hampton Roads MSA will expand by an average of 7,500 jobs per year, and during the balance of the decade, the local economy will grow by 11,200 new jobs per year.

Regarding active military employment, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates has called for the elimination of approximately half the 2,400 active military employees at the U.S. Joint Forces Command by March 2014 with the consolidation of operations into one of three buildings now occupied. Local military and real estate experts feel that new government employees will quickly absorb the two vacated buildings because of the secured and advanced technology nature of these buildings, and ultimately this “right-sizing” exercise should result in actual employment growth at these facilities. Active military employment during the balance of the decade is likely to decline at a rate similar to that experienced during the last decade as defense spending declines.

Since 1980 the Hampton Roads MSA has grown annually by 18,800 people in 8,500 households. As the recovery gains momentum during the next two years, employment growth will fuel population growth of 11,000 people per year in 4,950 households, and on average through the next decade the MSA should

**Table 1**  
Socioeconomic Trends

Characteristic	Hampton Roads MSA			City of Suffolk		
	1980	2011	2021	1980	2011	2021
Civilian Employment	656,811	1,031,800	1,136,200	—	—	—
Population	1,208,955	1,790,859	2,005,900	47,621	89,430	108,700
Households	402,888	667,268	750,000	15,742	32,939	39,030

Sources: City of Suffolk and THK Associates Inc.

Note: — = not available.

grow annually by 21,500 people in 8,300 households. By 2021 over 2 million people will reside in 750,000 households in the Hampton Roads MSA.

The city of Suffolk today has 89,000 people in 32,900 households, and since 1980 it has been growing by 1,350 people per year in 550 households. In the last decade, the city of Suffolk's annual growth has accelerated annually to 2,340 people in 880 households, and it has been capturing approximately 12 percent of the MSA growth.

The five-mile radius or primary trade area (PTA) of the subject site is projected to grow annually by 1,600 people in 600 households, and by 2021 it will include more than 90,000 people in 32,300 households.

## Economic Trends by Land Use

The following sections identify and analyze the major market trends by various land use demands. Published statistics as well as onsite investigation have established that a five- to seven-year inventory of vacant commercial buildings and improved lands already exists, and this product should be absorbed before new buildings are constructed or additional lands improved with expensive infrastructure. This period will allow Confluence Point ample time to be planned and entitled properly, finalize cleanup, and put infrastructure and, if required, appropriate incentive financing vehicles in place.

### Retail, Office, and Flex R&D Trends

The Hampton Roads MSA has a total of approximately 45.4 million square feet of office space: 11 percent in the Norfolk central business district, 30 percent on the Peninsula, and 59 percent on the Southside. Approximately 3,000 buildings are included in this inventory, and Cushman Wakefield reports the vacancy rate at 12.4 percent whereas CB Richard Ellis reports the current vacancy rate at 15.4 percent. Since 2006, office construction in the MSA has averaged 810,000 square feet annually on 53 acres. In Suffolk, an inventory currently exists of 2.3 million square feet of office space in 186 buildings, and the vacancy rate is reported to range from 9.4 percent to 20.5 percent. Since 2007, Suffolk has averaged annually the construction of 80,700 square feet on 5.3 acres and has captured 11.5 percent of the Hampton Roads MSA office market.

Based on employment growth by industry type and the percentage of this employment that will likely be

housed in office space, it is estimated that annually during the next decade, the Hampton Roads MSA will average the absorption of 1 million square feet of office space. Confluence Point's PTA should capture approximately 12 percent of the MSA market, and annually it should enjoy a market for 122,000 square feet on ten acres. In Confluence Point's PTA, five business parks currently have a five- to seven-year supply of vacant buildings and improved land. After five to seven years, Confluence Point should be able to capture 35 percent of the market, or with adjustments for government demand, approximately 48,300 square feet per year on 3.7 acres.

The Hampton Roads MSA has an inventory of 114 square feet of flex/research and development (R&D) and industrial space with 30 percent on the Peninsula and 70 percent on the Southside. The overall industrial vacancy rate is 9.5 percent, and since 2006 this market has averaged annually the construction of 1.3 million square feet. Suffolk has an inventory of 8.7 million square feet in 168 buildings, which represents 7.7 percent of the metropolitan total. The current vacancy rate of flex/R&D and industrial space in Suffolk is 21.3 percent, and since 2007 Suffolk has averaged annually the construction of just 29,000 square feet of industrial space.

Based on projected employment by type of industry in combination with the percentage of employment housed in industrial space, it is estimated that during the next decade the Hampton Roads MSA will average annually the construction of 1.1 million square feet of industrial space, of which 20 percent, or 220,000 square feet per year, will be flex/R&D space on 25.3 acres. The panel believes that only flex/R&D space is appropriate for consideration as a use in Confluence Point, and it does not believe that manufacturing or warehouse uses would be appropriate. The subject site's PTA should capture approximately 30 percent of the MSA market and annually should enjoy a market for 66,000 square feet on five acres. Given that five business parks in the area have a substantial amount of vacant and improved sites, after five to seven years Confluence Point should be able to capture approximately 21,200 square feet per year on 1.5 acres. In total, Confluence Point should absorb 69,500 square feet annually on 5.2 acres for office/flex/R&D.

The Hampton Roads MSA currently has a little over 100 million square feet of retail space, which represents 56 square feet per capita. Of this total, 34 percent

is on the Peninsula and 66 percent is on the Southside. The current vacancy rate is 6.5 percent. Since 2006 the MSA has constructed 1.3 million square feet per year. Suffolk has 5,531,000 square feet of retail in 274 buildings, or 62 square feet per capita. Suffolk has 5.5 percent of the MSA total retail square footage, and the current vacancy rate is 7.5 percent. Since 2006 Suffolk has constructed 145,000 square feet of retail space annually on 15 acres, and it has captured an average of 11 percent of the MSA construction.

Projected population and household growth in the MSA in combination with median family incomes of \$67,300 (which exceeds the state and national average) and retail expenditures annually of \$28,200, lead to the estimate of a demand for the construction of 1,250,000 square feet of retail space per year in the Hampton Roads MSA. Within the PTA of Confluence Point, one can estimate that demand will exist for 180,000 square feet of retail space on 16.5 acres. Based upon the location of Confluence Point and the dynamics of the PTA, one can further estimate that Confluence Point can capture 35,000 square feet annually on 3.3 acres, and this absorption should occur following a five- to seven-year period.

In 1988 the Hampton Roads MSA had 29,500 hotel rooms, and today the inventory has expanded to 39,000 rooms. Moreover, on average during the last 21 years, the total market has added 450 rooms annually. Current occupancy of hotel rooms in the MSA is estimated at 53 percent, which suggests that the market is oversupplied by approximately 4,700 rooms. Approximately 675 hotel rooms are located within the Suffolk PTA, which represent less than 2 percent of the MSA total. The PTA is projected annually to enjoy a demand for 110 hotel rooms per year, but new construction is not anticipated to occur until the current occupancy is at 65 percent to 70 percent. Confluence Point, following a five- to seven-year period, should capture an annual average of 25 hotel rooms per year on approximately 0.5 acres.

### Residential Construction Trends

As demonstrated in the economic base discussion, as a result of projected employment growth over the next decade, the Hampton Roads MSA should grow by 21,500 people in 8,300 households, but during the next three years the growth will be at 70 percent of this level.

**Table 2**  
Commercial Development Trends

Use	2011 Inventory	Historical Annual Construction	Projected Construction
<b>Hampton Roads MSA</b>			
Office	45.4 million sq. ft.	808,300 sq. ft.	1,015,500 sq. ft.
Industrial	334.7 million sq. ft.	1,309,500 sq. ft.	1,103,300 sq. ft.
Retail	100.6 million sq. ft.	1,315,100 sq. ft.	1,248,000 sq. ft.
Hotel	39,000 rooms	450 rooms	515 rooms
<b>Suffolk PTA</b>			
Office	2,303,800 sq. ft.	80,700 sq. ft.	122,000 sq. ft.
Industrial	8,730,600 sq. ft.	29,300 sq. ft.	110,300 sq. ft.
Retail	5,531,500 sq. ft.	144,700 sq. ft.	180,400 sq. ft.
Hotel	675 rooms	20 rooms	25 rooms

Sources: City of Suffolk and THK Associates Inc.

**Table 3**  
Historical Residential Development Trends

	30-Year Annual Average	Ten-Year Annual Average	Three-Year Annual Average
<b>Hampton Roads MSA</b>			
Single Family	7,654	5,991	3,656
Multifamily	2,593	1,927	1,597
Total	10,248	7,918	5,253
<b>City of Suffolk</b>			
Single Family	493	719	378
Multifamily	108	145	29
Total	601	864	407

Sources: City of Suffolk and THK Associates Inc.

Since 1980 the Hampton Roads MSA has averaged annually the construction of 10,250 residential units, of which 75 percent have been single family. During the last decade, this number has declined to 7,900 units with 75 percent again being single family. In the last three years, construction has declined to 5,250 residential units, of which 70 percent are single family.

Since 1980 Suffolk has averaged annually the construction of 600 units, or 6 percent, of the MSA total, and 82 percent of the units have been single family. In the last decade, Suffolk's construction has grown to 865 units, or 11 percent, of the MSA growth, of which 83 percent are single family. In the last three years, construction has declined to 410 units, or 8 percent, of the MSA, and 93 percent has been single family.

On the basis of projected employment and population growth, the Hampton Roads MSA is expected to enjoy an average annual demand for 4,700 single-family units, 1,300 townhomes and condominiums, and 2,300 rental apartments. The Suffolk PTA will have an annual average demand for 400 single-family homes, 190 townhomes and condominiums, and 200 rental apartments. If adequate land is available, Confluence Point, on average, could annually capture 25 single-family homes on four acres, priced above \$274,000; 35 townhomes and condominiums on 3.5 acres, priced above \$150,000; and 50 rental apartments on two acres.

## Summary of Land Use Recommendations

In order to capture the average annual market demands projected in the preceding sections for urbanization at Confluence Point, the panel can recommend a land use program that should result in the most profitable absorption of the subject 444-acre site, of which 319 acres are estimated to be developable and salable. On the basis of projected land absorptions, total buildout of the subject property will take approximately 25 years, which would include a three-year period to plan, entitle, clean up, finance, and prepare the site for sales. Following this period, residential land sales and construction are anticipated during the next two years, and commercial land sales would commence in the fifth year. Land uses recommended for the site are shown in the accompanying table.

With this recommended land use program, at build-out approximately 7,100 people would be employed, and 3,400 people would reside at Confluence Point.

**Table 4**  
Projected Ten-Year Annual Average

	Hampton Roads MSA	Suffolk PTA
Single Family	4,700	360
Townhouses and Condominiums	1,300	90
Rental Apartments	2,350	175
Total	8,350	625

Sources: City of Suffolk and THK Associates Inc.

**Table 5**  
Recommended Land Uses

	Land Use	Acres	Square Footage or Units
<b>Office, Flex, R&amp;D</b>	General Office	42	512,000 sq. ft.
	Flex/R&D	15	183,000 sq. ft.
	Medical Related	20	244,000 sq. ft.
	Military/Government	30	366,000 sq. ft.
	Total Office, Flex, R&D	107	1,305,000 sq. ft.
<b>Retail</b>	Community Retail	25	275,000 sq. ft.
	Highway Oriented	10	100,000 sq. ft.
	Restaurants and Entertainment	11	125,000 sq. ft.
	Total Retail	46	500,000 sq. ft.
<b>Hotel</b>	Hotels and Lodging	10	350–500 rooms
	Total Commercial	163	2,000,000 sq. ft.
<b>Residential</b>	Rental Apartments	44	1,100 units*
	Townhouses and Condominiums	80	800 units
	Single Family	32	200 units

Source: THK Associates Inc.

\*Includes assisted living, congregate care, nursing home, and hospice housing.

# Development Strategies

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The panel heard repeatedly from community stakeholders that successful development of this site means creating a vision for the site followed by doing the right thing and doing it well. What, then, is the “right” thing? The panel believes that the right thing involves all of the following elements.

## Capitalize on Key Assets

The community should undertake an exercise to understand and capitalize on the site’s key assets. The panel believes that those assets include but are not limited to the following:

- Central location in Hampton Roads, readily accessible by the adjacent interstate;
- Gateway function to Suffolk from Newport News, Hampton, and the north on I-664;
- History of Native American life, early English settlement in North America, and strategic location in the American Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War; and
- Prominent river access to the Nansemond and James rivers.

## Select Compatible Uses

Uses compatible with those key assets should be developed. Recreational, hospitality, residential, academic, research, and office uses attracting people throughout the day would be the most compatible and would benefit from the site’s assets.

## Have Patience

The community will need to exercise patience in the selection of ultimate uses. The market, of course, will determine when and how much space can be developed. However, judging the suitability

of individual market opportunities for the site as they come along will be important.

## Rebrand as Confluence Point

Doing right at this site also means creating a character of development different from what has been built elsewhere in Suffolk. The property has too much development potential to have only one land use or the lowest-density suburban development, and it has too little access capacity and market strength to support high-rise urban buildings. In addition, the scenic importance of the site does not support the idea of high-rise buildings. The character of future development may best be described as a community at the confluence of rivers (and roadways) that contains low- to mid-rise buildings (up to six stories), is completely walkable, and has prominent open spaces with parklike roads and landscaping. Acting as the front door to the site, the character of development on the EDA parcel will establish an image for the entire site. Getting that right will greatly influence the success of Confluence Point’s development.

## What Is Not the Right Thing?

Many uses prove compatible with the site’s assets, but some definitely do not. The panel firmly believes that industrial uses, warehouse or distribution functions, and big-box retail are inappropriate for this site and would not be the right thing to develop. Such uses cannot benefit from locations with important views because their buildings have large, blank walls. Furthermore, industrial and warehouse buildings occupy large areas with few people working inside; they do little to add vitality to a place. Finally, traffic from heavy trucks creates conflicts with recreation, hospitality, and residential uses better suited to view and waterfront properties.

## Buildable Area

The panel estimates that approximately 319 of the site's 444 acres can be developed. This estimate reflects the following approximate land allocations:

Parcel	Acres
Total site	444
Environmental preserve (TCCREF parcel C)	89
Wetlands with minimum 100-foot buffer	21
Shoreline buffer (100 feet)	15
<b>Estimated total buildable area</b>	<b>319</b>

The likely buildable area correlates well with the projected market demands previously outlined.

## Former GE Plant Property

The panel believes incorporating the former GE property into the overall development of the subject site is advisable to avoid this portion of the property being out of character with the future development of the overall site. The former GE site is the only property zoned M-1 in this general area. The facility is losing some of its functionality and may hamper the ability to fully achieve the maximum potential of the area. In addition to more appropriate and compatible use of the facility, secondary access to the subject site is needed and could potentially be achieved through the GE property.

## Land Use Recommendations

The panel has approached the task of planning the site holistically and strongly encourages the city and the TCCREF to do the same. Yet the panel recognizes that the EDA and TCCREF properties differ somewhat in the types of land use that would be most appropriate for each. Accordingly, and for the sake of simplicity, the panel's recommendations address the EDA and TCCREF properties separately.

### EDA Site

The 55-acre EDA parcel has excellent visibility and accessibility from a major intra-regional highway, Interstate 664. The parcel is centrally located within the Hampton Roads MSA. It is the gateway to the mixed-use community that the panel proposes for the overall site. The parcel is presently heavily wooded, hindering potential users from evaluating the merits of the property to accommodate development. Its current wooded state

has the effect of making the parcel blend into the landscape; certainly, the site does not stand out as one being promoted for economic development purposes.

### Single User

Ideally, a single-user office campus, such as a corporate or regional headquarters, would maximize the fiscal and economic impact to Suffolk. Unfortunately, a very limited market for this type of use exists at any given time. Therefore patience and a commitment to stay the course are required. Given the attractive qualities of the EDA parcel, the city will experience pressure to do the "easy thing." Even though the project is most likely long term, the panel will point out some steps that need to begin immediately later in this report.

### Multitenant Office Building Complex

Over time, the type of project with the most likely potential to occur is development of a multitenant office building complex. Given market conditions and because demand will span several years, this type of development will probably occur in multiple phases. Parking demand may ultimately need to be met by structured parking and thus site planning needs to account for that possibility. The buildings would be four to six stories in height with floor plates ranging from 12,000 to 20,000 square feet. The buildings would be designed with flexibility to accommodate one user or multiple, smaller users per floor.

The panel believes the area along Armistead Road is capable of developing more quickly than others in Confluence Point. The right type of project (which could change over time) could quickly become a "seed project" that provides impetus for additional development on the site. Project types that could locate in this vicinity include technology- and modeling-oriented office space, medical office buildings, apartments, defense-related uses, and similar uses.

### TCCREF Site's Optimal Future Land Use

Based on the market projections and the vision of Confluence Point developed over the next 20 to 25 years, the panel recommends the following uses.

### Public Space

Engaging public spaces focused on the waterfront would create a defining element for the site and

would include a promenade along the river shoreline, a *Monitor/Merrimack* feature to commemorate this singular historic event, and a commons for informal community gathering or even programmed activities such as a farmers market or small performances. These spaces should be appealing, so that at the outset of development, they will create greater long-term value for future land uses.

#### *Recreation Uses*

The site should include a variety of active and passive recreational uses that are mainly related to the rivers and could include fishing piers; accommodation of recreational boats, including docks and marina facilities that would facilitate boat traffic between the site and downtown's boat ramp and dock; and paths for walking and cycling throughout the site and to the river.

#### *Housing*

A variety of housing products should be considered for the site, ranging from single-family units (five per acre) to townhomes and condominiums (ten per acre) and rental apartments (two to four floors, 25 per acre). Appropriate uses could also include retirement and continuing-care housing for seniors and active adults.

#### *Hotel*

Another use to be considered is hotels to serve office users and capture highway traffic. If supported by the market, conference and banquet facilities could be offered.

#### *Restaurants*

High-quality restaurants situated with great views of the river and the sunset are an excellent opportunity to enliven the TCCREF site. The focus should be on both formal and casual dining with the opportunity for all-day bistro and café operations. Also, because workers are looking for a relaxing break from office routines, restaurants that cater to the lunchtime crowds should be a special focus for areas near the water.

#### *Convenience Retail*

Neighborhood convenience retail to support residents and site users should be built into the development plan. Although the market projections indicate that more retail could be supported, the site's single

point of access limits its traffic capacity and therefore limits how much space can be served.

#### *Educational Uses*

Educational uses would be fully compatible with and could be beneficially integrated among these other uses.

## Development Sequence and Early Actions

Given the estimated five to seven years before market conditions justify new construction, the site's owners should seize the opportunity to accomplish selected improvements now that will guide later development and increase its value.

#### *EDA Site*

The panel recommends strongly that the EDA parcel be prepared so it may be marketed as a shovel-ready site. To achieve such status, it is necessary to immediately grub the site, initiate site engineering, improve perimeter infrastructure, complete pregrading, and design the stormwater management system. "Shovel-ready" is a term commonly used by site-selection consultants and brokers to establish a minimum threshold for sites to be considered for build-to-suit projects. Failure to undertake this basic step will limit the potential for success. Because the ultimate development of the EDA parcel will be relatively long term, a greater likelihood exists that the site could land an unanticipated major user in the shovel-ready condition. Site consultants are looking for reasons to eliminate sites from consideration rather than include them. A user would be highly unlikely to be able to adequately consider the site in its current condition. Furthermore, often sites of this nature need to be able to proceed on a fast-track basis, and failure to do the initial site preparation will not be in the best interest of trying to attract centers of employment.

The panel also recommends the development and implementation of a marketing strategy and program. The first step would be to identify and select a national broker or site-selection consultant with experience and expertise assisting corporate and regional office users in site searches. The broker or consultant should work with the EDA to develop a targeted industry approach that identifies those industries whose needs match well with the attributes of



Suffolk and the Hampton Roads region. Modeling and simulation firms, other technology companies, military support activities, and R&D entities could be among the targeted industries. Marketing materials, including extensive online exposure, should be developed to promote the property’s availability. State and regional economic development officials should be made aware of the site and the tools Suffolk has available to work with qualified prospects.

Design standards should be developed to require that the buildings reflect the highest possible qualities and will be worthy of this dynamic location. Design

standards would address building materials, facade design, signs, lighting, and other features influencing the building appearance. Given the proximity from I-664 and the fact that the EDA parcel is the gateway to the larger site, careful attention needs to be paid to sustainable and attractive design parameters.

Currently, 60,000 vehicles per day travel past the site on I-664. Effective signage should be installed immediately to advertise the site’s availability.

The panel strongly suggests that the deed restrictions that were part of the initial transfer of this site from the college to the city be revisited, reviewed, and revised

Shoreline stabilization must be a priority as redevelopment of the site begins.

as needed. The panel recognizes the need to retain the intent of the original restrictions, but some degree of flexibility should be incorporated to emphasize the quality and quantity of jobs created on the site rather than try to describe the types of industry. Because of the dynamic nature of emerging technologies and businesses, as well as the fluctuating nature of the defense sector, industry type may not be the best characteristic to use as the key factor in determining the appropriateness of a project proposed for the EDA parcel.

Finally, the panel encourages the parties to develop a financial incentive program that identifies ways to maximize the attractiveness of the site to targeted prospects. This program should include at a minimum investigating the use of tax increment financing to help pay for major infrastructure improvements, including shoreline stabilization. Either the Route 17 Taxing District can be used or a separate taxing district can be created for this site. In addition, the funds the EDA has invested in the acquisition of this property can be used to establish “creative financing” program options.

### TCCREF Early Activities

TCCREF should consider selling Parcel C to the Sewer District. This parcel, located east of I-664, has limited development potential, and the panel feels that it is less favorably located and is too isolated to be effectively incorporated into the site’s overall development. The panel believes that the parcel offers greater value to its owner, TCCREF, through a sale to the Sewer District. Conservation easements for the protection of wetlands and other environmentally important features should be incorporated in the sales agreement. Proceeds from the sale would help TCCREF fund initial infrastructure improvements.

TCCREF and the city should prepare a master plan and a detailed market feasibility study for the site to identify key locations for land uses, public amenities, and major infrastructure, as well as the amount and type of space to be developed. TCCREF should provide selected infrastructure to support public amenities that will help guide subsequent development in accordance with the master plan. Specifically, stabilization of the shoreline and creation of a promenade will help refine and define future land uses. This work would primarily be a public responsibility because it benefits

the public by providing public access to the riverfront and by creating the potential for greater land values and higher future tax revenues on parcels abutting the promenade and other open spaces.

TCCREF should create public amenities linked to the shoreline promenade, such as a fishing pier and initial portions of open spaces. These features will offer recreation to the public and begin to frame the site’s layout for future building. During the initial phases of development, existing roads can continue to be used for access.

Finally, TCCREF should remove existing buildings on the site that will not be reused. They present a poor image for the site and need to be cleared to help create a new, positive image.

### What Is Tax Increment Financing?

The *Code of Virginia* §58.1-3245 through §58.1-3245.5 enables tax increment financing (TIF) districts to be created in Virginia.

TIF is a financial tool generally allowing use of real estate tax revenue resulting from future increases in real estate assessments from private development to finance current public improvements associated with the new development. More specifically, a designated geographic area (TIF district) is created. The base-year real estate tax assessments within the TIF district are frozen, and taxes generated from the base level of assessments continue to flow to the General Fund over the life of the TIF district. Future increases in real estate taxes generated from the increase in assessments from the new development within the TIF district are used to finance public improvements. Once the debt for the public improvements is retired (or other obligations are met), the TIF district is dissolved and all the increased incremental real estate tax revenues also flow to the General Fund. The real estate tax rate in the TIF district is the same as the citywide rate; residents and businesses within the TIF district pay the same amount of taxes whether a TIF district is imposed or not.

*Sources: City of Virginia Beach and Code of Virginia.*

# Planning and Design

Before discussing the panel’s recommendations for the site, one must take a step back and look at the city in context. The panel believes asking the following questions is important: What are the larger planning imperatives for the subject site? How does that affect moving forward with development of the site? The panel applauds those who saw the early land use opportunities for the subject site and captured regional growth significant to establishing Suffolk as a player in the economic engine of the Hampton Roads region. However, much of northern Suffolk is characterized today by a land use pattern that is definitely suburban in character, somewhat random, and with relatively low land use.

If, indeed, the area is to capture its fair share of regional growth to benefit the city of Suffolk, the city needs to establish clearly what that vision should be. Development of the waterfront site will not be a panacea unless a new vision for northern Suffolk is established. Suffolk needs one voice, one commitment to an urban strategy that realizes job growth, revenue

enhancement, and an unwavering commitment to high-quality place-making. The city must rethink the Comprehensive Plan for the northern area and establish an urban approach within the core of Confluence Point that sets the table for increased land values, defines a robust public realm, and shouts “we have committed to creating a memorable community.” This is Suffolk’s moment, and the development of the waterfront is linked to the city’s vision for the area.

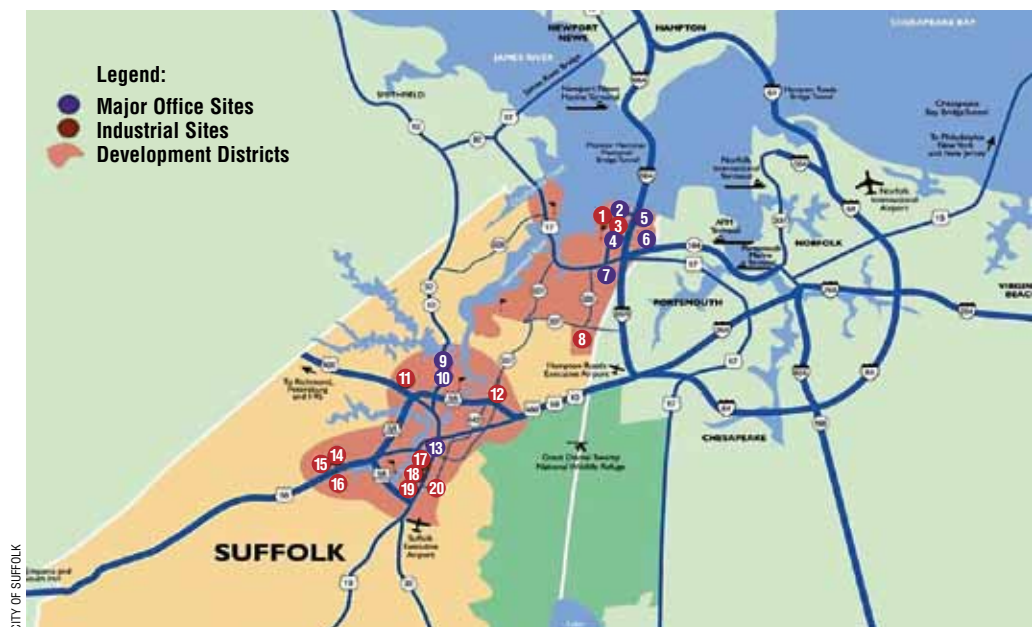
## Best Property in Hampton Roads

Many of the interviewees who met with the panel noted that northern Suffolk is the geographic center of the Hampton Roads region—and this property may indeed be the last and best large property available in Hampton Roads. This is lofty praise for a Superfund site, but it does speak to the opportunity. In fact, this site is large enough to accommodate a multitude of uses accessed from a number of directions. If the Patriot crossing is accomplished, the site becomes even more accessible. It has

Office and industrial sites in the city of Suffolk.

### City of Suffolk Office and Industrial Sites

1. Bridgeway Business Center
2. Hampton Roads Technology Park
3. Bridgeway Commerce Park
4. Harbour View Commerce Park
5. Lake View Technology Park
6. Mast Center at Hampton Roads Crossing
7. Belleharbour
8. Northgate Commerce Park
9. Hillpoint Business Park
10. Godwin Commerce Park
11. Virginia Regional Commerce Park
12. Wilroy Industrial Park
13. Downtown Suffolk
14. Virginia Commerce Center
15. CenterPoint Intermodel Center
16. Westport Commerce Center
17. Suffolk Industrial Park
18. Enterchange at Suffolk
19. Commerce Center Hampton Roads
20. Waverton Commerce Park



the opportunity to be a regional destination that complements historic Downtown Suffolk by providing places for public access, gathering, recreation, education, working, shopping, and living on the James River confluence with the Nansemond River and the wider mouth to Chesapeake Bay. It is a different experience from the quaint nature of Downtown Suffolk and its cozier relationship to the Nansemond River.

### Opportunities

The panel's interviews, coupled with the sponsor's briefing and tour, revealed the following opportunities to the panel:

- *I-664 accessibility.* The first exit headed southbound from Newport News after crossing the James River on I-664 is College Drive, which has direct access into the site. Very little development density has occurred in the vicinity of this interchange or is planned that would cause concern or hinder future development potential.
- *Harbour View Boulevard capacity.* This four-lane facility has adequate capacity with left-turn pockets and acceleration/deceleration lanes at intersections to handle turning movements. The roadway was built to handle future traffic and is the main artery paralleling the interstate through the north Suffolk core.
- *Excellent views from I-664.* The southbound views from Newport News and its approach to the site are excellent and allow an unobstructed view of whatever buildings, landscape, or other monuments would be erected.
- *Large contiguous ownership.* Finding a site of this size in a metropolitan region that is not encumbered by numerous landowners is rare.
- *Rich history (Monitor and Merrimack, military connections).* At the intersection of the Nansemond and James rivers and not far from the Chesapeake Bay, the site has a well-documented history in recent times and can be assumed to have been important during Native American colonization. Strategic war defense and associated actions date from the Revolutionary War through the Vietnam era, providing a chance to tell a compelling story through interpretation and iconography.
- *Ecological richness in the Streeter Creek watershed.* This watershed is one of the few places left undisturbed that is a microcosm of the Chesapeake Bay with a sandy beach, tidal marsh, and various landscape ecozones. It provides an opportunity to educate and conserve.

### Constraints

The panel's observations also revealed the following constraints:

- *Superfund-designated hot spots going through cleanup.* Several sites still remain active clean-up locations being overseen by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. However, in general, few restrictions on development appear to exist, but more investigation and site characterization needs to be verified within the next several years.
- *Shoreline bank stabilization.* The bank is eroding rather vigorously because of an unprotected shoreline. Future development will require a stabilized flood-free environment.
- *Eighty acres of wetlands.* A wetlands delineation has been submitted to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and verified to be approximately 80 acres (including buffer zones) within the TCCREF property ownership. These lands will need to be avoided, or aggressive mitigation strategies will have to be adopted.
- *Limited access, particularly the parcel east of the I-664 bridge.* College Drive and Harbour View Boulevard are the access points into the 55-acre city property, and College Drive is the only access into the larger TCCREF parcels west of I-664. Armistead Road is the only access point into the 89-acre TCCREF parcel east of I-664 via a bridge over the interstate.
- *Potential archaeological status unknown.* Given the rich history of the site, significant artifacts could be buried beneath the soil surface that could alter the development of the property.
- *Large buildings to remove.* Many buildings are on the site, some of which are large structures that would be costly to remove. Although the panel was unable to ascertain any viable users for such structures, the panel recommends, in the absence of market demand, that they be removed in phases, starting with the older, unoccupied buildings.

## Create the Public Realm Framework

The panel recommends creating a public realm framework that displays and establishes the primary circulation system and open-space system. This framework will be the armature to which all future land use decisions respond; it establishes the most important component of any urban place—what is public and what is memorable.

To be successful, the framework has to establish a waterfront zone of contiguous linear open space a minimum of 100 feet deep from the waterline inward, with public access and numerous pedestrian connection points into the neighborhood and to surrounding properties. The panel also recommends that a public gathering place be established on the site. It could be located on the waterfront edge near the confluence of the James and Nansemond rivers. This location has the power to become the central community gathering place connected to the waterfront trail just mentioned and with views of the

open water and Isle of Wight beyond. Indeed, this location could become the most sought-after place for community gathering in all of Hampton Roads.

The public realm must also contain a rational, connected circulation system for various modes of traffic. The panel recommends that connections be made to roadways such as Bridgeway Drive to the southwest to achieve an interconnected north Suffolk road network and to avoid placing all traffic on Harbour View Boulevard and College Drive. To access the community gathering place on the waterfront, a central signature defining open space can be formed that would be framed by a circulation couplet extending to the waterfront. This backbone roadway pattern will then provide the nucleus from which all other roadways would radiate. The panel believes this “parkway” would create an attractive front door into the site, framing distant views of the waterfront.

Because of the isolation and limited access of the parcel to the east of I-664, the panel recommends that no additional roadways beyond Armistead Road would be



The central organizing feature for the public realm framework is a community spine consisting of landscaped open space that widens as it approaches the river. The community spine terminates in a public plaza and promenade along the river.

necessary to Parcel C of the TCCREF holdings. Those lands would be best suited for environmental interpretation of the ecosystem in and adjacent to Streeter Creek. Additionally, the large lake on the site, east of College Drive, and a corresponding buffer zone should remain, and its capability to function as a stormwater retention area should be upgraded. This area and the lands adjacent to Streeter Creek provide much-needed natural areas on the property for environmental stewardship while increasing surrounding land values.

Finally, a well-designed landscape master plan should be created, which, when executed, can define vistas, will provide shade, and is attractive to visitors and potential investors.

### Alternative Land Use Visions

The panel recognizes the buildout of the site will happen over many years; therefore, TCCREF and the city must remain flexible to adjust to market demands over time. With the public realm frame-

work as a guide, options should be established for how the land uses plug into the framework. The panel has created three options to demonstrate how that process could occur, but these options are illustrative only and should be used as the starting point for creating a master plan for the site. All land use options for the property should incorporate some degree of mixed use, with some of the mixing in vertical formats as driven by market demand. Also, civic or public components, or both, should be included within the development parcels.

#### Option One: Commercial Uses Define the Community Spine

This option recognizes that the 55-acre site with frontage adjacent to the interstate is best suited for commercial use. Access into the parcel should be from both College Drive and Armistead Road.

Uses could include R&D, corporate offices, office suites, medical offices, and support services such as food and beverage establishments. A signature open

Option One:  
Commercial uses define  
the community spine.



space should be established within the parcel to distinguish it from other competing business parks. Although the deed for the property is focused on office and commercial development, the panel notes that if the market for those uses does not materialize within the next seven to ten years, other uses such as residential or retail should be considered.

Within the TCCREF portion of the site, commercial uses could also front the major civic axis to the waterfront, establishing a three-story and higher building wall that frames the views to the waterfront. Where feasible, parking for the commercial uses would be behind the buildings in either structured garages or in surface lots, depending on the floor/area ratio (FAR), ground coverage standards established in the master-planning process, and construction costs at the time of development. Realistically, both types of parking solutions may be allowed. Establishing higher FAR standards closer to the waterfront would result in buildings with parking levels above the ground floor or in shared parking garages. Ground-floor restaurant uses and support services could occur within the parcels that are closer to the waterfront.

The remaining lands on the TCCREF site (approximately 125 acres) would be primarily residential, providing a population that would be on the property 24 hours, thus activating the public spaces. An initial higher-density, well-designed apartment complex could be the first project built at the intersection of Armistead Road and College Drive fronting onto the adjoining lake area. Townhouses and other medium- to higher-density products could be built along the waterfront that would have 180-degree views from Norfolk to the Isle of Wight.

The panel recommends in all options that the lands east of I-664 be used for environmental interpretation and conservation. A small parking area can be located on the property for school buses and visitors to access a regional nature center or similar facility.



### Option Two: Residential Uses Define the Community Spine

This option would address the 55-acre city site in a fashion similar to the first option.

Within the TCCREF portion of the site, residential uses of varying height would front the major civic axis to the waterfront, establishing a three-story mid-density product at the entrance and moving higher to a mid-rise product at the waterfront that achieves densities of 60 to 100 units per acre. Ground-floor restaurant uses and neighborhood-serving uses could occur within the higher-density parcels at the street level.

Commercial uses on the TCCREF parcel would front the waterfront with exposure from the many vehicular trips that head southbound on I-664 from Newport News. Mid-rise buildings here could be established that potentially also have some of retail and support uses at the ground level. Parking would need to be established in parking structures that could be shared between parcels to avoid large surface park-

Option Two: Residential uses define the community spine.

ing lots adjacent to the public waterfront. Similar to option one, any uses here would have tremendous views unparalleled in the Hampton Roads region.

### Option Three: Residential and Commercial Uses Define the Community Spine

Again, this option would address the 55-acre city site in a similar fashion to option one. Lands north of Armistead Road could be devoted to both commercial and high-density uses, given the juxtaposition of the adjacent interstate.

Within the TCCREF portion of the site, commercial uses would front the major civic axis to the waterfront for approximately half the distance, establishing a three-story and higher building wall. The remaining parcels stretching to the waterfront would be higher-density residential with ground-floor restaurant and neighborhood-serving uses.

In all of the options, some lower-density residential could occur away from high-traffic zones. The panel realizes that a large amount of that product has already been constructed in north Suffolk and has not attempted to describe precisely where that product would be located.

### Live the Dream!

This part of the planning and design presentation demonstrates the experiences that could occur on the site. Visions need aspirations that keep the momentum moving forward in years to come. The city and TCCREF are encouraged to establish design guidelines that are unique to the site and to establish a coordinated view on parcel setbacks, building heights, building material palette, building style, paving materials, lighting fixtures, signage, landscape, and monuments. The details of public realm execution will define the difference between memorable and ordinary.

The panel believes that the waterfront gathering place needs to establish a theme that embraces the unique history of the site. A large plaza with iconographic elements that include a water feature, stepped seating, and multiple places for small and large groups to gather is important. A proposal for a wind-energy testing turbine that is related to workforce education and training is also a possibility for inclusion in this area.

Option Three: Residential and commercial uses define the community spine.



Illustrative views of the proposed development showing active recreation and leisure uses in a well-planned urban environment.



# Implementation

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**E**conomic development activity has increasingly taken on a regional focus. Significant consideration is given to the assets that the host region is able to provide to a given business when sites are selected. In today's global economy, one locale can rarely provide all the elements that an industry requires to be competitive. Access to a highly skilled workforce is frequently cited as the number-one criterion in location or expansion decisions. Proximity to university or other research resources is important to an increasing number of firms. Proximity to markets and good transportation access continue to be strong drivers in business locations.

Given these considerations, the availability of this marquee site, within the context of the Hampton Roads region, provides the sponsors with unique and interesting opportunities.

## Take Advantage of the Region's Strategic Competitive Advantages

The strategic advantages of the Hampton Roads region will help drive value-added investment to the site, which serves as a gateway to the southern portion of the region. Business expansions and locations are made on the basis of a broad array of factors often too numerous to be addressed by a single municipality.

The region boasts a significant number of strategic assets:

- Location in the mid-Atlantic coastal area;
- Access to a highly skilled workforce;
- Intellectual resources of institutions of higher learning (Hampton Roads Research Partnership);
- National laboratories;
- Existing high-value sectors (information technology, cyber security, modeling and simulation, energy, military, tourism);

- Good transportation access by automobile, air, rail, and ship; and
- Excellent quality of life.

The Suffolk EDA and TCCREF should work together to harness these resources in a manner that will enhance the value of the site for commercial development. This involves investing in relationship building and partnerships that will enable the owners to bring these resources to a potential user. The owners must understand these resources, quantify them, and use them in marketing the site.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership is interested in supporting the efforts of the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance and its municipal members to foster the development of creative partnerships that enrich the environment in which to grow and diversify the economic base. These partnerships also lay the groundwork to attract diverse investment to the area. As the local private sector identifies research and workforce needs, the state is able to make available resources that support local business, community, and education initiatives. The Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing is an excellent example of such support. The state would like to see more centers of excellence developed in areas of strong sector interest. Examples of this activity are already taking place in the region between Eastern Virginia Medical School and Old Dominion and Hampton University, which are partnering with NASA and Jefferson Lab.

With the current intellectual and physical infrastructure available in the region, and particularly in the Suffolk area, a center of excellence in information technology, or one of its subsectors, such as cyber security or modeling and simulation, would appear to be a good opportunity for the city of Suffolk and TCCREF to bring local employers, university research resources, and federal agencies to the table to work with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance to create this type of center.

Although corporate headquarters locations are relatively rare, the opportunity to land one of these facilities at Confluence Point is enhanced by the strength and sophistication of the business, education, and economic development partnerships that can be created to serve this locale.

## Build on the Rich History of the Site

The site affords a spectacular view of the James River, the Nansemond River, and the site of the Battle of Hampton Roads. The proposed plaza will provide a new visitor attraction for regional tourism as well as a wonderful asset for the Suffolk community. The public waterfront park and recreational amenities proposed will benefit not only Suffolk residents but also the entire region. Depending on how TCCREF and the city opt to develop these recreational amenities, the facilities have the potential for generating a revenue stream to support public space maintenance and operations through rentals and modest user fees.

## Continue Current Efforts to Work Closely with Federal Agencies

The facilities to be vacated by the U.S. Joint Forces Command represent unique assets for Suffolk and the U.S. General Services Administration. Given the high value and specialized nature of the physical facilities, one can anticipate that other uses will be identified for these buildings, which, in turn, may create additional economic development opportunities for Suffolk. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Virginia National Defense Industry Authority both have staff dedicated to monitoring the facilities needs of federal agencies and departments. They are also tasked with packaging and marketing the state's sites and facilities to potential federal users. Every effort should be made to ensure that these individuals have a clear understanding of the capacity of the city and TCCREF to deliver not only a physical site but also intellectual and other physical infrastructure that may be required.

## Continue to Collaborate with the Port Authority Board

Although the panel is not recommending that port-related uses such as warehousing, cargo handling, or

or intermodal facilities be located on the site, it does recognize the importance of the port as an economic engine in the region. Opportunities may exist for the site to host technology-intensive businesses that could benefit from proximity to port facilities.

## Market the Site

To secure the highest and best use of the site, the panel recommends a number of avenues be pursued to market the site. These suggestions pertain primarily to potential users' office and R&D space, which in turn generate demand for retail, hospitality, and residential uses:

- *Quantify and update regularly information on the regional assets that add value to the site.* This information includes workforce data (skills, costs, training capacity), access to markets (population and transportation data), regional research activity and access to university resources, and business cost and incentive data.
- *Take advantage of state resources that monitor federal facility needs.* The owners have an excellent relationship with the leadership of the Joint Forces Command. They should also take advantage of the staff of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Virginia National Defense Industry Authority to heighten awareness of the site and its competitive advantages among other federal agencies and department.
- *Continue to work closely with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance.* These agencies are often the first point of contact for site selectors and brokers seeking a site in the region. Make sure that representatives of these organizations are familiar with the site, its attributes, and the owners' development interests. Leverage the marketing activities of these organizations to promote the site.
- *Be prepared to work directly with interested parties to supply cost and infrastructure information for the site, based on revised zoning.* Identify potential infrastructure capacity and costs and have a team of local partners ready to work with a potential user on cost projections for these elements.

- *Market the site, regionally, nationally, and internationally.* Market with national brokers. The panel also recommends that the owners maintain contact with the major site-selection firms to make them aware of the site.

## Capture the Opportunity

The panel believes that achieving the highest and best use of the site requires that the Suffolk EDA and TCCREF work in partnership on site development. The panel believes everyone's best interest is served by treating the site as if it were under single ownership. This strategy ensures complementary uses and eliminates the possibility that one buyer will pit the two owners against each other, diminishing the value of the asset as a whole. The owners should evaluate various options related to the ownership and development of the property (outright sale versus ground lease) to determine which provides the most beneficial long-term return.

Toward this end, the panel recommends that the EDA and TCCREF enter into an operating agreement that provides a vehicle for shared decision making on issues related to development. As a part of this agreement, the owners would share in the cost of hiring a development manager. The panel recognizes that the staffs of the current owners have multiple demands on their time. Retaining a firm with the time, capacity, and expertise required to oversee the many critical activities that must be accomplished within the next two to three years will help ensure that the project moves forward in a timely manner. This firm would answer directly to the owners. It would be responsible for overseeing all of the tasks necessary to prepare the site for future development, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Overseeing the master plan process;
- Working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a remediation schedule and monitoring the progress of that work;
- Overseeing any infrastructure improvements, land clearance, and other activities made in advance of development on the site;
- Seeking grant and other funding to support development activities;
- Overseeing rezoning of the site;

- Managing the development of public space improvement; and
- Overseeing the marketing of the site.

The city has bonding capacity for this area (Route 17 Taxing District) that could be used to assist in funding infrastructure, shoreline preservation, and public space improvements.

## Establish a Timetable with Realistic Milestones

Much work must be done over the next one to three years to ensure that the site is positioned to achieve the highest and best use over the long term. The panel suggests that the following steps can be taken immediately:

- Create the joint operating agreement and select a development manager.
- Negotiate the sale and dispose of the parcel to the east of I-664 to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District, with the understanding that the district will set aside a portion of the property at the mouth of Streeter Creek and include a portion of the forested area to the west for the Nansemond River District Preservation Alliance to create a Chesapeake Bay Nature Study Area and facility in perpetuity.
- Create the master plan and detailed market feasibility study for Confluence Point.
- Preserve the shoreline.
- Create a timetable for remediation of each site by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and if necessary, determine the mechanism to permit reimbursement of private dollars that may be used to expedite the remediation process.
- Develop the public amenities.
- Enhance the existing road infrastructure to support the public amenities and potential future development.

## Projected Costs and Sources of Funding

Inevitably, costs are associated with making Confluence Point a community asset and a viable develop-

ment opportunity that can fulfill the vision established by the community. Following are order-of-magnitude costs that must be considered:

Development manager	\$150,000–200,000 per year
Master plan	\$200,000 (one-time cost)
Shoreline stabilization	\$20–75 per linear foot
Public square and waterfront development	\$5,000,000–6,000,000

Potential funding sources for these activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use the proceeds from the sale of the parcel to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District.
- Bond against current excess revenues from the Route 17 Taxing District. The current revenue stream provides for 15-year bonding capacity of \$12.85 million or 20-year capacity of \$17.1 million.
- Use proceeds derived from the creation of a tax increment finance district to fund infrastructure in support of additional development of the site. It may be possible to bond against future revenue for site preparation.
- Obtain state and federal grant funding for shoreline protection and recreational amenities.
- Obtain support from local, regional, and national foundations and institutes, including the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

TCCREF and the EDA may want to explore some form of joint ownership of the public spaces, because the city may be the only entity eligible for federal and state grant funding to support development of these types of facilities. In addition, the city may wish to assist with maintenance and upkeep after the amenities have been developed.

## Collaborative Process and Proactive Steps

The process is not going to be easy, but if it is done properly, the outcome is going to be great. The panel heard several common goals that will contribute to the success of the site: *gateway*, *public access*, and *legacy*. These themes give the owners a place to begin. This project requires the obvious: infrastructure investment and technical expertise.

It also requires less-tangible assets: people power, patience, and cooperation.

The bad news is the market is not ready for the development of the site. The good news is the site is not ready for the market. This gap provides an opportunity to position the site by providing a framework for when the site and market are ready. Fortunately, the owners do not have unrealistic expectations of the market and are prepared to be patient. However, much work needs to be done while patiently waiting for the market to rebound.

The first step is to establish a *framework* on which to hang the cooperative efforts of the owners. The site is in different ownership, but it needs to be treated as single ownership so that it can develop as more than the sum of its parts. If this effort is not made, then the competition between the landowners will hurt everyone—not just the city of Suffolk, but the entire region. The owners must work together to resolve the remaining environmental issues, maximize infrastructure investment, and ensure they are viewed as a single entity by developers and regional economic development entities. This approach recognizes the strategic, unifying location on the site and its potential to provide a unifying gateway to the city of Suffolk. The city and TCCREF must take control of this process now.

Economic development does not happen in a silo. This gateway is bigger than the city of Suffolk. It joins the Peninsula to the Hampton Roads region and has the potential to attract those who are simply passing through to other destinations. Site development potential will be optimized if the owners remember they are part of a bigger region. The city and TCCREF need to speak with one mind and be recognized as a force within the region to advocate within the region to maximize site opportunities.

To maximize the potential of the framework and to build on the enthusiasm generated by this presentation, the owners should not wait to take action. A core group from the EDA/city and TCCREF should convene immediately. The panel will leave behind this PowerPoint presentation. This core group should review the PowerPoint with an open but critical mind. What works, and what does not work? Are the problems solvable in the short term or in the long term? What are the best parts of the proposal? What are the hardest

parts to achieve? Establish priorities in the context of the market. The owners need to be nimble but realistic.

## Important Information and Studies

Much work needs to be done to advance the vision. The panel recommends that the owners identify what professional and technical studies are required to prepare the site for development. These studies need to be identified, prioritized, and funded. Specifically, the Corps of Engineers has not completed cleanup of the site. The owners need to establish which portions of the site have been cleaned and to what development standard. Furthermore, the owners need to intervene to stop the circular argument that the Corps of Engineers needs a definitive development plan before it can complete cleanup. Undoubtedly, this site is not the first highly marketable one that has been under Corps of Engineers' cleanup. Allowing this situation to persist will result in no development activity, even when the market is ready. Therefore, the owners must identify other models of working with the Corps. If the cleanup cannot be strategically advanced with less than full development plans, then the owners should work with the Corps of Engineers to establish a program under which the owners advance the cleanup and are reimbursed by the Corps.

Other technical studies that need to be completed include archaeological and geotechnical investigations. Given the history of the region, archaeological traces from the Middle and Late Woodland periods are likely present on the site. If so, coordination with the Nansemond people will be required. Additionally, given the military use of the site, historic fill may be present that will affect the ability to build foundations or at least the height and location of structures. Potential developers will find this information valuable, thus maximizing potential return on investment for the current owners.

## Public Improvements, Visioning, and Planning

An important part of the unified vision is public involvement in the design and implementation of the public improvements. Giving the public a means for participation will help facilitate the development because an informed public is more likely to be supportive. High-quality public space available for everyone will create unified support. To that end, the owners need to provide an opportunity to encourage

creation of a “community vision” for the public space on the waterfront in the master plan process. That process should include public input opportunities and lead to a vision that

- Identifies public goals;
- Builds on existing assets;
- Creates multiple-use destinations;
- Connects destinations along the waterfront;
- Creates important public spaces and maintains waterfront access; and
- Balances environmental benefits and human needs with economic development objectives.

Developing this gem of a site takes more than patience—it also takes perseverance. Ups and downs will occur as well as pressure to change direction. The owners need “people infrastructure” to react to these pressures. Again, the owners need to stick together and stay focused on the ultimate goal, remembering that it may take a long time to reach. The owners must recognize that a direct relationship exists between the two development parcels. Regardless of the location of the first development in Confluence Point, ultimately the 57-acre site is the gateway to the larger parcel. The design and implementation of that site affect public perception of the total development. Additionally, investment in the public realm will create a first-quality gathering space for events as well as casual recreational use. The installation of first-class public amenities is not only important to the ultimate character of the development on that parcel, but it also is critical to greater Suffolk and to the greater Hampton Roads region. The total is greater than the sum of the parts.

This development can be the glue that joins the region, providing economic opportunities and public amenities. However, success requires long-term commitment and, perhaps more important, long-term cooperation from all the players. The opportunity is within reach to make Confluence Point a true gateway project, combining first-class public amenities with high-quality economic development and residential opportunity—a true legacy project for all involved.

# Conclusion

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Suffolk is poised to capture significant population and job growth from historical economic drivers as well as from leveraging and expanding those drivers into new and different applications.

Suffolk is currently blessed with an abundance of shovel-ready land and improvements to capture short- and medium-term opportunities, enabling Suffolk and TCCREF to appropriately plan for and position Confluence Point for the capture of medium- and long-term opportunities.

The site is an exceptional waterfront property in the Hampton Roads market. It represents an opportunity not only to create a memorable and special physical community and public space, but also to do so in a way that achieves the underlying benefit maximization objectives of Suffolk and TCCREF.

The panel has recommended a development organized as a series of options that will allow the city and TCCREF to react and adjust to the market as it returns from the worst recession since the Great Depression. These options envision a central organizing community spine, a revitalized shoreline, and a series of mixed uses that will provide Suffolk with a welcome gateway into the city. It is a 25-year project with nothing likely to appear in the next three to five years. This timing presents a perfect window to do the necessary planning for eventual development—planning that should start now. Working as one, TCCREF and the city can design a framework that maximizes the value of the site and creates a remarkable environment for private investment and public space.

# About the Panel

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## Alex J. Rose

*Panel Chair*  
*El Segundo, California*

Senior vice president for Continental Development Corporation in El Segundo, California, Rose is responsible for managing all development, acquisition, and redevelopment activities for the suburban office/medical/R&D park developer, whose holdings cover nearly 5 million square feet in southern California's Los Angeles County South Bay and city of San Francisco markets.

He has overseen the development and acquisition of over 1 million square feet of Class A office, medical, and retail space and the physical transformation of over 1 million square feet of single-tenant R&D facilities into multitenant office space, restaurants, retail, and entertainment uses. Current projects include the repositioning and conversion of a 400,000-square-foot mid-rise data center to a mix of public and commercial uses; repositioning of 400,000 square feet of obsolete, low-rise R&D facilities into alternative uses; repositioning a 500,000-square-foot office park to medical uses; redeveloping a 108-acre chemical plant site into 850,000 square feet of promotional and lifestyle retail; redeveloping multiple obsolete retail properties into medium-density residential-over-retail infill mixed-use projects; and several fee-based development management assignments.

Rose's previous responsibilities have included planning and execution of all tenant improvement, core and shell renovation, and new construction work; major facilities maintenance and upgrades; project budgeting and cost controls; internal project management; architect, engineer, and contractor management; and asset and property management. He also has extensive experience in title insurance and is a licensed California attorney with experience in general civil and bankruptcy litigation practices.

Rose received his MBA from the University of Southern California (USC), his JD from Southwestern University School of Law, and a BA in political science from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). He has served as a trustee of ULI, is chair of ULI's Los Angeles District Council Executive Committee, and is a member of ULI's national District Council leadership group, its philanthropic Annual Fund Committee, its Infrastructure Finance Advisory Group, and its Small Scale Development Council. Rose is also a past chair of ULI's Commercial and Retail Development Council and a vice chair of its national Program Committee. Rose has chaired and served on numerous national ULI Advisory Services panel assignments focusing on downtown and transit-corridor redevelopment and revitalization and office development issues. He regularly mentors numerous students and young professionals through formal mentoring programs organized through ULI as well as UCLA and USC undergraduate and graduate programs in business and real estate.

Rose has been a member of numerous other community, industry, legal, and UCLA- and USC-affiliated groups. He has also participated in programs such as Leadership Manhattan Beach and New Schools Better Neighborhoods.

## Dan Conway

*Denver, Colorado*

Conway is a real estate marketing and research authority specializing in residential, commercial and industrial, and golf course developments. He has had over 40 years' experience as an urban land economist. Conway is a frequent guest speaker for economic associations and trade organizations and is a member of and frequent speaker to ULI. He has been a real estate and urban land economic honorarium instructor at the University of Colorado and at the University of Denver. He has published many articles, including the *CCIM* magazine piece "Market

Analysis, the Road to Profit, Prosperity and Peace of Mind.” Conway’s other professional and community activities have included membership on the board of directors of a federally chartered national bank and membership in the Mile High Transplant Bank. He also participated on the Archbishop’s Inner City Sun School Committee to assess the future needs of elementary education in the inner city of Denver.

For the last 25 years as president and director of economics and market research for THK Associates, Conway has conducted numerous residential, commercial, industrial, and golf course economic feasibility and market studies, socioeconomic impact assessments, and financial planning studies in all 50 of the United States as well as a number of foreign countries.

Projects of particular interest include an international market center and industrial market analysis for the Dove Valley Business Air Park in Arapahoe County; a residential and related uses market analysis for several major developments in Douglas County, including the 1,342-acre Parker City site, all in Colorado; and numerous golf course feasibility studies throughout the country. Specific communities where Conway has completed a wide range of research and analysis include Las Vegas and Reno, Nevada; Oxnard, Palm Springs, and Carmel, California; Kansas City, Missouri; Oklahoma City and Tulsa, Oklahoma; Austin, Texas; Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico; Seattle, Washington; and Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona.

Conway frequently testifies as an expert witness for litigation in market and urban economic feasibility analyses, lost profits, and value analyses, and he has been qualified as an expert witness in numerous states, including Colorado, Arizona, New Jersey and Texas.

Most recently, Conway has gained recognition as a sought-after speaker on the golf course development circuit. His numerous presentations at the Crittenden Golf Development Expos have been widely attended and universally applauded. His book *The Cost and Revenues of a Unique Golf Club* has furthered his reputation as one of the industry’s leading authorities. Under Conway’s guidance, THK Associates completes more than 75 golf course feasibility studies and golf-driving-range market studies and appraisals each year.

## Allen K. Folks

*Sacramento, California*

Folks is a principal and vice president with AECOM Design + Planning (formally EDAW, Inc.) in Sacramento. He joined EDAW in 1987, working in the San Francisco office until 2003. A licensed landscape architect and planner, he directs the urban design studio in Sacramento and has prepared numerous master plans and directed the implementation of a wide range of projects in the western United States and internationally.

His experience includes the planning and detailed design of transit-oriented projects for several municipalities and developer entities as well as for the state of California as part of the high-speed-rail program. Folks has won awards from the American Planning Association (APA) for work in defining transit-served destinations along the BART corridor in the Bay Area and also in Sacramento along the Folsom line light-rail corridor.

Currently, Folks has been working in Portland, Oregon, and Saigon, Vietnam, developing urban design plans in high-density environments. He is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects, APA, and ULI. Folks has served on many ULI Advisory Service panels since 1998. He is currently the chair of ULI’s District Council in Sacramento.

## Jerold Franke

*Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

Since August 2000, Franke has been president of WISPARK LLC, the real estate development subsidiary of Wisconsin Energy Corporation. Franke began his career with WISPARK in 1988 as the director of business development. He was named vice president in 1989 and became senior vice president in 1998.

WISPARK is a leader in the development of innovative business settings and redevelopment projects, primarily throughout southeastern Wisconsin. WISPARK has developed over 4,000 acres of business parks and more than 11 million square feet of industrial, office, and mixed-use buildings.

Before joining WISPARK LLC, from 1987 to 1988, Franke was vice president for economic development of Forward Wisconsin, Inc., the state’s economic

development marketing organization. Previously, he was director of community development for the city of Janesville from 1980 to 1987 and also served as acting city manager for seven months. Earlier, he served in city planning positions in both Des Moines and Waterloo, Iowa.

Franke graduated in 1973 from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville with degrees in urban geography and economics. He presently is a member of the board of directors for WISPARK, LLC; Johnson Bank; Kenosha Area Business Alliance (past chairman); Forward Wisconsin; CenterPoint WISPARK Land Company; and the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP). Franke also serves on the national board of directors and executive committee of NAIOP and currently chairs its Urban Redevelopment Forum. He is the past president of NAIOP's Wisconsin chapter and previously chaired the organization's Business Park Development Forum.

Franke also is a member of ULI and the Wisconsin Economic Development Association. He is past president of the board of directors of the United Way of Kenosha County and was campaign chair in 1992. He is the past chairman of the board of directors of Downtown Racine Corp., past president of the Wisconsin Economic Development Association, and past chairman of the Racine County Economic Development Corp.

## Peter Hasselman

*Orinda, California*

Hasselman is an architect, urban designer, and perspectivist providing consulting services to clients across the United States. He began an unusual career after graduation from the University of Illinois and completion of military service: his first "client" was President Lyndon B. Johnson, for whom he designed the 1964 inaugural pavilion (by competition). Then, as a designer with several leading firms, Hasselman was associated with such projects as the Pennsylvania Avenue master plan in Washington, D.C.; the new town of Reston, Virginia; the Baltimore interstate highway system; and the rehabilitation of the Amtrak stations and the design of new maintenance facilities between Washington and Boston.

As a design principal, he designed numerous mixed-used, office, residential, industrial, and educational

projects on both coasts. To organize his professional life around the areas of his particular expertise, Hasselman now provides consulting services in planning, architectural design, and presentation drawings. Representative consulting projects include the development of Ford Island, Pearl Harbor; urban developments in Australia and Malaysia; resorts in southeast Asia, the Caribbean, Mexico, Spain, and Japan; a state-of-the-art theme park in Dubai; development of Long Beach Harbor; numerous town centers in the United States; illustrating the future uses of the Presidio of San Francisco; mixed-use projects in historic Prague and Utrecht; and the master plan for the transportation system of Izmir, Turkey.

As a frequent member of American Institute of Architects (AIA) and ULI panels, Hasselman has participated in studies of 16 cities in the United States. He was also a member of a small group of American architects that traveled to the Soviet Union to redesign the Armenian city of Spitak (which was destroyed in the 1988 earthquake) in the first such collaboration between American and Soviet architects. In addition, he was a member of an AIA multidisciplinary team that advised Atlanta on how that city should respond to the planning opportunities raised by the Olympics in 1996 and a ULI team that advised New Orleans after Katrina.

A number of projects have been recognized by competition award, design award, or design citation. Hasselman is generally known for his ability to integrate many viewpoints and interests into his work, the active character of his drawings, and a high rate of productivity. He is a member of the Urban Planning and Design Committee of the AIA, a periodic visiting critic at architectural schools, and an editorial cartoonist on architectural subjects. He was elected to the College of Fellows of the AIA in 1983.

## Donna Lewis

*Trenton, New Jersey*

Lewis is the planning director for Mercer County, New Jersey's Capital County. She has served Mercer County for 23 years. Mercer County is geographically and economically diverse, comprising large contiguous agricultural areas, suburbs, classic small towns, and Trenton, the state capital city. Her office is responsible for transportation and infrastruc-

ture planning; open-space, historic, and farmland preservation; land development review; and redevelopment planning. The office also administers the Open Space Preservation Trust Fund, which generated \$15 million annually.

Lewis is managing the restoration of the Louis Kahn Bath House in Ewing, New Jersey, the former site of the Jewish Community Center. This modern structure is individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was featured in the movie *My Architect*, by Nathaniel Kahn, the son of Louis Kahn.

She is a member of the National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council, an advisory board to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. She also serves on the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Transportation Needs of National Parks and Public Lands Committee and is a “friend” to the TRB Access Management Committee. Lewis is a member of the Central Jersey Transportation Forum Steering Committee and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. She has participated in two National Cooperative Highway Research Panels and in the national scan of best practices in highway access management. Lewis has sponsored two ULI Advisory Services panels and served on the panels in Anchorage, Rochester, Broward County, Virginia Beach, Annandale, and St. Louis.

Lewis holds bachelor’s degrees in political science and English from the College of New Jersey and a master’s of city and regional planning from Rutgers University. She is a New Jersey-licensed Professional Planner and a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners. Lewis has also been an adjunct professor at the College of New Jersey.

## Sue Southon

*Bloomfield Hills, Michigan*

Southon is a development professional, trainer, and strategic planner. In 1992 she founded Strategic Planning Services to provide strategic planning, site consultation, organizational development, project management (including construction project management), and grant writing assistance to industry, government, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions. Southon has extensive experience in community, economic development, and housing

development. Strategic Planning Services has offices in southeastern Michigan and New Orleans, Louisiana.

Prior to 1992, Southon was with the Michigan Department of Commerce, responsible for comprehensive strategic planning in distressed communities and assisting local government to develop and implement a range of business development and retention programs. From 1995 to 1996, Southon served as the senior director of business development for Michigan First, the state’s public/private business attraction and marketing organization. From 1980 through 1990, she was the executive director of the Independent Business Research Office of Michigan. Housed within the School of Business at the University of Michigan, the office was created as a public policy research resource for small business interests. Southon wrote federal, state, and foundation grants resulting in awards in excess of \$55 million.

Southon served on the Professional Development Committee that created the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) professional certification program. She assisted in developing the curriculum for the Marketing Business Attraction and the Strategic Planning modules and served as an instructor for both courses. She worked with the IEDC advisory services program on regional economic development, state business attraction, and strategic planning presentations. She has also trained on behalf of IEDC for the Economic Development Institute and the National Association of Workforce Boards. Southon was a regular volunteer for IEDC’s Gulf Coast Recovery Program.

Southon has worked extensively on community development and affordable-housing projects, with a focus on effective project management and the use of multiple financing mechanisms to finance affordable housing and community development in urban communities. She is currently serving as a technical assistance consultant for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program through its national contract with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation; the Michigan State Housing Development Authority; and the Detroit Land Bank Authority. Southon has bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the University of Michigan.

## Ross Tilghman

*Seattle, Washington*

Tilghman heads up the Tilghman Group, which provides transportation planning services. He brings over 25 years of urban planning experience, including serving as executive director of a downtown business improvement district. He provides transportation-related revenue projections, market studies, and planning and development strategies to government, not-for-profit, and private sector clients facing real estate development challenges.

Frequently working with nationally recognized planning teams, Tilghman has participated in the following recent projects: master plans detailing transportation requirements for Al Ain Wildlife Park and Resort, United Arab Emirates; Iowa's State Capitol Complex; Evergreen State College in Washington state; and Gallisteo Basin Preserve, New Mexico, as well as for downtowns throughout the United States. Central to these efforts are parking studies identifying future demands and space needs from which Tilghman develops parking management plans to support planned development. He has provided transportation planning for state capitol campuses working with Washington, Iowa, and Minnesota to improve their access and parking programs. Additionally, he

has undertaken transit market studies to identify ridership potential for new services in Denver and Los Angeles. He has also completed numerous special event and recreation area transportation plans, including those for San Diego's Balboa Park; Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami, Florida; the Iowa Events Center in Des Moines, Iowa; and Stones River National Battlefield, Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Since 2000, Tilghman has been working with the city of Tacoma to address its downtown parking needs, including the parking plan for the city's new convention center. He provided the revenue forecasts used to issue parking revenue debt.

Tilghman also served three years as director of a downtown business improvement district in Illinois. He oversaw maintenance, facade improvements, parking, and upper-story redevelopment efforts in concert with Main Street redevelopment principles. He successfully wrote a \$1.9 million grant to fund a streetscape construction project completed in 2002.

Tilghman frequently participates in national resource panels assisting communities with development questions, including ULI Advisory Services panels and Mayor's Institute on City Design teams. He received an undergraduate degree in history from Washington University in St. Louis and a master's degree in geography from the University of Washington, Seattle.



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