



# Northern Neck

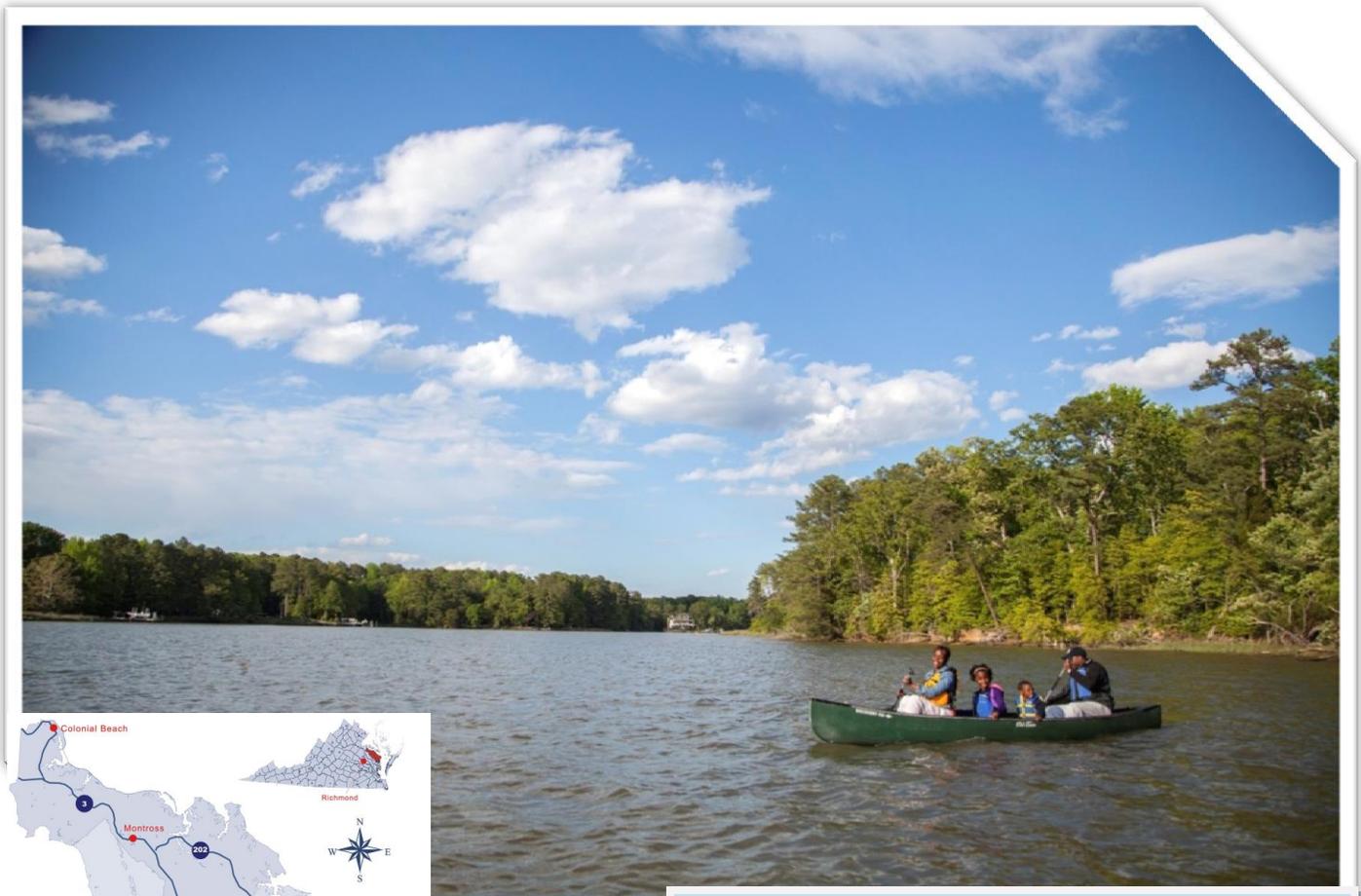


Photo by Sarah Hauser, Courtesy of Virginia Tourism Corporation  
Taken at Belle Isle State Park, Lancaster County, May 2013



## Economic Development Plan 2013-2018

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## **Stronger Economies Together Initiative**

Launched in 2009 by USDA Rural Development in collaboration with the nation's Regional Rural Development Centers (RRDC) and their land-grant university partners. The purpose of Stronger Economies Together (SET) is to strengthen the capacity of communities in rural America to work together in developing and implementing an economic development blueprint that strategically builds on the current and emerging economic strengths of their region. Important elements of the Stronger Economies Together program will build collaboration between communities in a region, provides economic analyses that is tailored to help capture the region's current or emerging clusters and comparative economic advantages and is supported by technical assistance provided by land-grant university extension systems to the regions over a period of several months including the SET training.

The Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership (NNCBRP) committed its energy to the SET program in 2012 when it realized that traditional agricultural, seafood, and forestry-based economy is in transition and can neither support the existing community nor facilitate economic growth. Accepted as one of two Virginia region's to participate in the fourth group of SET communities, the NNCBRP began recruiting participants for the SET program. On October 22, 2012, the first SET session was held in at Westmoreland State Park in Westmoreland County with 24 individuals ready to discuss the region's future. Between October 2012 and May 2013, over 40 local leaders participated in the 10 sessions with attendance ranging from 12 to 27 local leaders in each session.

The SET initiative has been the catalyst for regional thinking and planning. New partnerships are created, plans are in place, strategies are outlined, and people are engaged in implementing the ideas developed during the SET discussions.

## Northern Neck Executive Summary

The economy of the Northern Neck has been grounded in the land and water for over 200 years. Situated within easy driving distance from major urban centers of Richmond, Norfolk and Northern Virginia, the region has become a mecca for urbanites who seek a quiet retirement community or weekend getaways situated along the region's rivers and inlets.

Using regional data collected from the 2012-2013 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) process, many positive as well as challenging data points were discovered.

- Population in the Northern Neck region is 50,429. A 2.1% increase since 2000 Census, and a 12.5% increase in the 1990 Census.
- The senior population is segmented more in Lancaster and Northumberland whose percent of population over the age of 65 is 31.2 and 30.1%, respectively. While in Richmond and Westmoreland the percentage of seniors was 18.2 and 20.9%. In Virginia the rate is 12.5% and in the U.S. it is 13.0%.
- A statement that was repeated more than once during SWOT interviews conducted during the CEDS research was that there was no middle class. The area was either high or low income. Per capita income data for the four communities validates that attitude. In Lancaster per capital income was highest at \$48,607 and Richmond was lowest at \$26,941.
- All jurisdictions fall considerably below national and state averages for job wages. Average wage per job in Richmond County was \$35,332 and the lowest was in Westmoreland at \$28,209. The state average was \$52,072 which is higher than the nation at \$48,301.
- Among the top 20 occupations in the region, 38.4% work in occupations that earn less than \$11 an hour.
- Staffing patterns show that 58.3% of the workforce is employed in four industry sectors: 1) real estate and rental leasing; 2) health care and social assistance; 3) accommodations and food service; and 4) agriculture, forestry and fishing. With the top occupations in the service sector, the region is more subject to global economic fluctuations.
- Of residents age 25 and above, 20.7% do not have a high school diploma which is significantly higher than both national (14.6%) and state (13.4%) rates.
- The number of people in the district with "some college" does exceed the state average at 19.9%. Percentage of the population with bachelor's degrees is half for residents in Richmond and Westmoreland than Lancaster and Northumberland. All regions are below the state average of 20.2%.

Overall, the SET SWOT and the CEDS findings showed that love for the region's natural beauty to be the most valued asset. There is pride in the region and its history and the participants consider the Northern Neck to be a region with assets. The challenges are the lack of infrastructure and deep concern about the quality of the workforce. These challenges were summed up well with the observation that the region is "not bouncing back as quickly as before".

Understanding the existing issues, a Northern Neck Regional Economic Development Plan was written with goals and objectives focused on four areas: 1) infrastructure to facilitate the expansion of existing businesses and the attraction of new, higher-wage industry sectors; 2) workforce preparedness to succeed in a technology-based economy; 3) the creation of a business-friendly atmosphere for the region, and 4) effective and sustainable use of the region's natural beauty, cultural amenities, and tourism opportunities. Significant research and discussions have led to the development of this plan. This plan reflects a nine module SET planning process with active participation from business, civic, and community leaders.

The Northern Neck Regional Economic Development Plan will serve as the roadmap for the future regional economic development efforts. Based on significant research and community-wide discussions, key stakeholders have embraced a spirit of regionalism and support this initiative. Implementing the action items described within this document will strengthen the ability of the Northern Neck to secure its economic future and position it as a competitive region.

## Northern Neck Description

The Northern Neck is composed of the Counties of Westmoreland, Lancaster, Richmond, Northumberland and the towns of Colonial Beach, Irvington, Kilmarnock, Monross, Warsaw, and White Stone. It constitutes Virginia Planning District 17 and shares population, geography, natural, historical and economic characteristics.

Bounded by the Rappahannock River to the south, the Potomac River to the north and Chesapeake Bay to the east, this peninsula holds the regional descriptive identity of the “Northern Neck” (*of land*). The region held this identify for its commonalities long before the General Assembly divided the Commonwealth into 21 planning districts in 1969.

In February 1999, the Northern Neck Planning District Commission was designated an Economic Development District by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. As an economic region, the Northern Neck was studied in 2006 by James H. Johnson, Jr. Ph.D. and Allan Parnell, of the Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in “Northern Neck, Virginia: A Competitiveness Assessment”. All studies conducted on the Northern Neck have confirmed the willingness, need and capability of the Northern Neck Counties to seek and implement economic efficiencies on a regional basis.

Overall, the region is characterized by a regional spirit and supported by a love for the region’s history and geography.

## Northern Neck Regional Vision

Over 40 local leaders invested 3 months in clarifying the region’s values and discussing its future. After several drafts, the full group of stakeholders applauded a vision statement that represents its diverse values, its heritage, and its focus on balanced economic growth. The adopted vision statement is:

*The Northern Neck is a vibrant, skilled, and diverse rural community that sustains a well-balanced, growing economy which benefits from and values its heritage and natural resources.*



## Introduction

### Regional Collaboration

Response to the SET initiative was well balanced from each of the four counties. Richmond County had 10 participants, Lancaster was represented by 12, Northumberland by 11, and Westmoreland had 7 attending the SET discussions. A neighboring county, King George, which is also involved in the Northern Neck's tourism effort, was also invited to participate with 1 attendee (Appendix A). Even when participants were unable to attend the discussions, they received electronic communication on the topics and discussion points and had an opportunity to respond or add to the work conducted during the sessions. Although business participation in the SET sessions was limited, 69 local people were regularly emailed updates on the plan's progress. Of these individuals, the seafood industry, manufacturing, a sawmill, retail businesses, a local bank and investment company were represented. 

Regional collaboration was expanded because the SET process was merged with the updating of the Northern Neck's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Not only did the Northern Neck region have the expertise of the SET training team, but also was able to engage the Virginia Tech's Office of Economic Development (VT OED) in bringing together focus groups of youth and business leaders in conducting a SWOT analysis of the region. In addition to the 10 SET meetings, faculty from VT OED conducted 25 interviews with a diverse sampling of community leaders, including local community college students, representing industry, education, workforce and government organizations. Findings of the SWOT analysis were shared at a public meeting comprised of over 30 community leaders in December, where attendees were encouraged to give feedback. 



Small group discussions during Session One of the SET Program, Westmoreland State Park, October 22, 2012



As discussions were completed on each of the SET modules, it was clear what goals were needed to achieve the region's vision. Subgroups were identified for each of the four goal areas, and work began on identifying other stakeholders for each goal.

The plan has buy-in from several key decision makers in the region including Rappahannock Community College, Northumberland County Economic Development Commission, Bay Aging, Inc., Warsaw-Richmond County Chamber of Commerce, Lancaster County Economic Development Authority, Northern Neck Technical Center, Macedonia Community Development Corporation, Bay Consortium Workforce Investment Board, and Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership.

Key decision makers explicitly expressed commitment to support the plan's implementation by participating actively in the SET sessions and continuing to discuss steps related to the fulfillment of the goals established in the program. One outgrowth of the collaboration is a partnership between the Northern Neck Planning District Commission and Macedonia Community Development Corporation to establish business incubators throughout the region. After approval of the regional plan, meetings have started to develop the business incubation project.

Additionally, public input and support was garnered through presentation to the Northern Neck Planning District Commission Quarterly Meeting in April 2013, where the summary of the plan was presented and the regional economic plan was approved by the Commission, which is comprised of citizen and government representatives of each of the four counties participating in SET. This regional plan is available on the Northern Neck Planning District Commission's website at [www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/SET.htm](http://www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/SET.htm)

## **Regional Economic Development Plan**

### **Evidence Basis for Plan**

#### **Regional Demographic Data**

The population of the Northern Neck PDC service region is 50,429. The current population represents a 2.1% increase since 2000 Census, and is 12.5% greater than the 1990 Census. Each jurisdiction experienced moderate growth, adding about 2,000 individuals each during the period. Of the Counties, Richmond experienced the highest percentage of population increase (21.5%), followed by Northumberland County (14.6%).

The Northern Neck has a higher proportion of residents age 65+ than comparable national (13.0%) and state (12.2%) populations. Across the region, the proportion of the population age 65 and above has increased since 2000. Northumberland and Lancaster Counties experienced the highest percentage of increase in the 65 and above population.

Age demographics by sex reveal a slightly higher percentage of females, especially among the residents age 65+. The exception is in Richmond County, which has a notably higher percentage of males as the result of the institutionalized population in the jurisdiction. With the exception of Richmond County, all other localities have a slightly higher percentage of females. Household demographics provide further information highlighting differences between age and gender groups. Interesting to note is the fact that for the age 65 and above group of householders living alone, a very high percentage of these are women.

Whites (including Hispanics/Latinos) represent the largest race/ethnic group. Blacks/African-Americans are the second largest group, accounting for over one-quarter of all individuals. Disaggregation of data to capture the Hispanic or Latino population estimates such to be 4.8%.

## **Regional Economic Data**

Although regional per capita personal income appear relatively stable over time, there exist many differences across the multiple jurisdictions. For example, per capita personal income for residents of Richmond County is only 64.8% of the national average and well below the EDA economic distress threshold.

- The regional poverty rate is 16.8% (2011, USDA, Economic Research Service).
- Unemployment rates in the region remain higher than the Virginia rate; the annual unemployment rates averaged 8.45% (2011, USDA, Economic Research Service).
- Nearly 21% of the region's population, ages 25 and older, does not have a high school diploma.
- Staffing patterns show that 58.3% of the workforce is employed in 4 industry sectors: 1) real estate and rental leasing, 2) health care and social assistance, 3) accommodations and food service, and 4) agriculture, forestry and fishing. With the top occupations in the service sector, the region is more subject to global economic fluctuations.

## **Regional Assets**

The region's beauty and natural resources are considered overwhelmingly as both the greatest strength and its greatest opportunity. This includes water-based resources and agricultural-based assets, such as viable crop-land and forest products.

As the birthplace region of George Washington, James Monroe, and Robert E. Lee, regional residents felt there to be value and opportunity in the role these assets played in the founding and shaping of national history.

Given the natural beauty of the region as well as the historical significance of many of its best known locations, tourism surfaced as a natural driver for the regional economy.

For many business people, the geographic location of the region – between Fredericksburg/Washington D.C. and Norfolk was considered a positive attribute.

Admittedly these responses are from people who self-selected the region, but they offer valuable insights that can, and should be, explored.

Road infrastructure was rated positively on several occasions.

The influx of the newer, more educated "come heres" was recognized as a valuable talent pool that adds value to the community, particularly as part of an entrepreneurial initiative. The term 'come heres' is a regional colloquialism most often utilized to refer to individuals who have migrated to the region during their retirement years. The growth and vitality of the local banking sector was recognized as both a strength and significant opportunity. Furthermore, Rappahannock Community College is exploring new ways to better connect education to economic opportunities.

## **Potential Barriers and Related Strategies**

The two most commonly expressed concerns were the lack of broadband, and the capacity of the regional workforce. Underlying the concerns raised about the workforce reflected a deep pessimism about the lack of work ethic among the workforce and their willingness to participate in the economy.

Many people across all interview sectors expressed concern about the segmentation of the region's employment base and their current earnings potential.

As more than one person observed, there are only two classes of people here: rich and poor. The idea that the region has grown resistant to any type of change surfaced during the discussions. While many stated great appreciation for the positive qualities that the region's new arrivals had brought to the area, there also existed a wide concern that in an effort to protect the region's best qualities, the new attitude was in fact 'choking the region's potential.'

There also appeared to be concern about a lack of leadership across the region, particularly in the business community. There was considerable concern expressed about the region's infrastructure. Broadband being the most obvious, but other concerns expressed include lack of natural gas, lack of three-phase power and spotty cell phone coverage. Another aspect of a workforce threat included a rampant concern about the state of the public schools. This included both facility and performance threats.

Tourism was mentioned as strength and an opportunity; however, the lack of hotel rooms and the inability to handle bus tours was seen as a threat to this industry sector.

The loss of HUB zone status also surfaced as an immediate concern by certain business sectors. Additionally the loss of this designation could undermine opportunities to leverage the geographic advantages of the region.

Concern was expressed about the possible degradation of water quality and oyster beds.

One telling observation about the community was summed up by the statement that the community "was not refreshing itself as fast in the past." This statement reflects concern for declining youth populations, and the threat of a slow-down for in-migration of senior citizens.

## Regional Economic Goals



Understanding the values of the residents, the vision for Northern Neck, and its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, the SET team utilized its resources and identified four regional economic goals areas.

<b>Goal Area 1:</b> Infrastructure that facilitates the expansion of existing businesses and attracts new, higher-wage industry sectors	<b>Goal Area 2:</b> A workforce equipped with the skills and flexibility needed to succeed in a technology-based economy	<b>Goal Area 3:</b> A more business-friendly atmosphere across the Northern Neck	<b>Goal Area 4:</b> Effective and sustainable use of the region's natural beauty, cultural amenities, and tourism opportunities
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The Northern Neck Regional Economic Development Plan is outlined in the following text. Measurable objectives and strategic steps were defined for each goal along with the resources, timeline, and person responsible. Each of the four goal area groups entered all the components of the plan into the Plan of Action (Appendix D) and will use this document to guide the implementation process and to summarize activities related to each goal's strategies.

**Goal 1:**

**Provide infrastructure that facilitates the expansion of existing businesses and attracts new, higher-wage industry sectors.**



*Regional Economic Benefits*

This goal recognizes that the region has to provide the infrastructure necessary for existing industry to stay competitive in a global economy and to provide a platform to develop new industry sectors in support of the region’s strategic goals.

Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
<b>Objective A: Expand and improve quality of telecommunications infrastructure across four counties.</b>					
1) Develop public-private partnership to accelerate the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the four counties.	Northern Neck Broadband Authority, MetroCast, Northern Neck WiFi, Verizon Wireless, and other providers	2013-2016	USDA loan application pending, current upgrades within service area	Northern Neck Broadband Authority	1) Square miles served by ISPs; 2) Number of customers served by ISPs; 3) Number of permit applications for pole installations
2) Review land-use ordinances to make it easier to obtain telecommunications-infrastructure permits	Counties, Boards of Supervisors, Planning Commissions, Land Use Offices	2013-2014	Planning Phase	Boards of Supervisors, County Administrators	Number of jurisdictions updating their ordinances
<b>Objective B: Improve transportation infrastructure.</b>					
1) Implement the 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan.	Counties, towns, VDOT, CTB, Bay Transit	2013-2035	Pending CTB funding	VDOT District Office and PDC	At least one project from 6-year plan completed each year
2) Develop regional bus links to connect the Bay Transit bus network.	Bay Transit	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Bay Transit, Counties, VDRP, Federal Highway Administration 	New bus routes established
3) Pursue funding for spot improvements to Route 3.	VDOT, CTB, Counties	2013-2018	Pending CTB funding	Counties, VDOT District Office, PDC	1) Number of road improvements completed; 2) Decrease in the number of accidents

Target Outcomes:

- Increase square miles served by ISPs from 375 to 563 by 2015
- Increase number of customers served by ISPs from 25,500 to 38,250 by 2015
- Update ordinances for ease of obtaining telecom-infrastructure permits by 2015 in four jurisdictions
- Implement at least one project from 6-year transportation plan per year starting in 2014
- Establish five new bus routes by 2015



Short Term:

Increase knowledge and skills of local citizens in internet usage.

Inform public of deployment progress of high-speed options as they become available in the area.

Offer website design and internet marketing classes through business incubators.



Intermediate:

Will engage the public in meetings to review land-use ordinances to secure support from elected officials and appropriate agencies to facilitate obtaining telecommunications-infrastructure permits.

Long Term:

Provide high-speed, robust internet in region for business development.

Provide public transportation connectivity through flexible bus routes covering all four counties with access to towns and work sites to promote economic development.

Enhance local ride-sharing program through downloadable app.

**Goal 2:**

**Equip the regional workforce with the skills and flexibility needed to succeed in a technology-based economy.**

*Regional Economic Benefits*

The second goal addresses the need to improve college and career readiness and prepare citizens for a more technologically-advanced world. The centrality of the region’s maritime tradition to the region’s economy and self-identity suggests an emphasis on that industry cluster.

Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
<b>Objective A: Offer additional education and training programs in K-12, post-secondary, and adult education and dual-enrollment programs through Rappahannock Community College and other institutions and providers</b>					
1) Develop a marine-technology and career-technical Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Academy.	RCC, Northern Neck Technical Center, School Districts	2012-2018; The proposed beginning date is school year 2013-14 with funding being provided at the local level.	The board of education approved the proposal to establish a Governor’s STEM Academy in Richmond County.	the NN Technical Center STEM Academy board	earned employment rate; # of people completing the program and gaining a credential; 100% of teachers are trained to teach their respective programs
2) Connect career-training programs to more closely match IT, maritime, and healthcare industry identified needs.	RCC, Technical Center, School Districts, VEC/WIA	Start date for formal planning -2013	Informal meetings are being held now	RCC Workforce Development and CTE	50% increase in IT certifications

3) Create a formalized "business services and needs" group for the NN region	NNCBRP, VEDA, RCC, Small business development center, Chamber of Commerce, NNPDC, VEC, WIB	Start informal planning immediately in Spring/Summer 2013 with a stakeholder meeting	groups are independently working on this that need to be brought together; each county has a local resource council that will also come together to form a regional group	WIA	complete a needs assessment by September 2013
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<b>Objective B: Provide access to workforce resources for students and jobseekers mastering workplace-readiness skills</b>					
1) Schedule at least two workplace readiness and career readiness certificate programs used by local institutions at each of the two community college campuses.	RCC, Technical Center, School Districts, VEC Workforce Center, WIA (workforce investment act)	Fall 2013	Planning Phase	RCC Workforce Development	a 25% increase over the current number of people receiving these certificates in the 2013-14 school year
2) Host four recognition events to promote existing certificate programs to workers and employers throughout the region.	All of the above and the chambers of commerce	Spring 2014	Planning Phase	RCC Workforce Development, VEC, and WIA	a 200% increase over the current number of businesses that recognize these certificates in the 2013-14 school year
3) Schedule two office and accounting systems computer courses at each campus at community college.	Goodwill Foundation - provides online courses, Public Libraries, VEC, and RCC	Fall 2013-Spring 2014	Some programs already exist	VEC	a 50% increase in the number of offsite courses being offered

4) Promote three soft-skills training programs throughout the region and create new ones as needed	RCC, VEC, Toastmaster, CTE, VA Tech Cooperative Extension, and Univ. of Mary Washington Small Business Development Center	2014-2015	Planning Phase; The WorldWide Interactive Network (W-WIN) now offers an online soft-skills training module	Chambers of Commerce	the courses are scheduled during off-business hours; course attendance increases by 100%
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Target Outcomes:

- Increase earned employment rate from 92.6% to 95% by 2016
- Reach and "re-tool" individuals who are no longer in the job market, but are still unemployed or underemployed by 2015
- Increase IT certifications by 50% in 2015
- Expand by 25% over the current number of people receiving workplace and career readiness certificates in the 2013-14 school year



Short Term:

- Engage public support to conduct a needs assessment for 'business services and needs.
- Inform public about results of needs assessment through social media campaign
- Inform community leaders about the progress in developing a marine-technology and career-technical Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Academy in the Northern Neck

Intermediate:

- Expand participation in soft-skills training programs.
- Encourage local employers to solicit workplace readiness and career readiness certificates for employees.
- Promote enrollment in basic computer skills courses.

Long Term:

- Connect local industries with STEM Academy.
- Align workforce and career-training programs with IT, maritime, and healthcare industry-identified needs.
- Create a formalized "business services and needs" group for the Northern Neck region

**Goal 3:**  
**Establish a business-friendly environment across the Northern Neck.** 

*Regional Economic Benefits*

The third goal aims to support existing businesses while building opportunities for new businesses in the region and is based on the C.A.R.E. model (Creation, Attraction, Retention, and Expansion).

Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
<b>Objective A: Deliver training and resources to support existing small-businesses and potential entrepreneurs.</b>					
1) Educate the region's government agencies on regional, local and state incentives and programs that support business development through small group workshops and Resource Fair	SBDC, RCC, SCORE, VCC, Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, the NNPDC, Visions	2013-2014	Planning Phase	RCC and Visions	Number of government employees trained
2) Promote the region's Enterprise Zone program	Counties, Chambers of Commerce, Towns, NNPDC	2013-2020	Ongoing	NNPDC	Number of Enterprise Zone applications submitted per year
3) Create a "Business Information Packet" for the Northern Neck region that includes an inventory of resources and a survey for feedback	NNPDC, Counties, Towns	2013-2014	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Number of packets requested
4) Establish at least one business incubator/accelerator per county	SBDC, RCC, SCORE, VCC, Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, the NNPDC	2013-2018	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Number of incubators/accelerators created
5) Form a team of local experts to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs with business, financial and marketing guidance	Local retirement community, Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury, local churches	2014	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Council formed and active assisting businesses.

**Objective B: Establish the region as a marine-hub for the Mid-Atlantic (See Appendix C for Water-Based Cluster Map).**

1) Implement tax policy favorable to marine activities in the region	VIMS, Counties, Chambers of Commerce	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Boards of Supervisors, County Administrators	1) Number of policies implemented; 2) Number of slips available; 3) Number of water-access locations; 4) Number of boats registered
2) Develop tourism initiative with watermen and marinas	VIMS, Marina Owners, Northern Neck Tourism Commission	2013-2018	Pilot project in progress	Northern Neck Tourism Commission	Number of initiatives
3) Recruit businesses and industries where geographic proximity between Norfolk and Baltimore will be a strategic advantage	Northern Neck Tourism Commission, NNPDC	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Northern Neck Tourism Commission	Number of businesses recruited

**Target Outcomes:**

- Increase number of incubators/accelerators from 0-4 over from 2013-2017.
- Increase number of startup firms from 7 to 16 by 2015.
- Develop or recruit three new businesses that employ 10 or more by 2014.



**Short Term:**

- Educate the region's government agencies on regional, local and state incentives and programs that support business development through small group workshops and Resource Fair
- Visit Chambers of Commerce to inform the business community about the advantages of the region's Enterprise Zone program.
- Create a "Business Information Packet" for the Northern Neck region that includes an inventory of resources and a survey for feedback.
- Increase public awareness and hold public meetings on implementing a tax policy favorable to marine activities in the region
- Create tour packages for operators in the Richmond, Williamsburg and Charlottesville regions to offer the Northern Neck to travel groups.

**Intermediate:**

- Engage local business community with funding and resource partners to identify sites, markets or products for business development.

- Form a team of local experts to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs with business, financial and marketing guidance

Long Term:

- Increase businesses and industries where geographic proximity between Norfolk and Baltimore will be a strategic advantage.
- Establish one business incubator/accelerator per county with training component on how to establish other incubators as well as on marketing and accounting technical assistance.
- Sustain a regional culture that supports small business development and entrepreneurs

**Goal 4:**

**Promote and protect effective and sustainable use of the region’s natural beauty, cultural amenities, and tourism opportunities.**

*Regional Economic Benefits*

The fourth goal aims to promote and protect the defining asset of the Northern Neck. The region’s economy has been anchored to the water and the land for over 200 years. Its future is still tied to these assets as part of the traditional economy as well as gateways to a new economy.

Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
<b>Objective A: Encourage local economic activity through branding and marketing.</b>					
1) Brand Northern Neck foods, wines, and other products with a tag that can be easily recognized beyond the State of Virginia. For example, “A Product of George Washington’s Northern Neck”	Northern Neck Tourism Commission (NNTC), Virginia Tourism Corporation, all related private-sector owners, TLCVA.com; Westmoreland County Tourism	2013-14	beginning	NNTC	Number of producers creating Northern Neck-branded products; sales generated by Northern Neck brand.
2) Create a Northern Neck food trail	Northern Neck Tourism Commission (NNTC), Virginia Tourism Corporation, all related private-sector owners, TLCVA.com; Westmoreland County Tourism	2013-14	beginning	NNTC	Measurable increase in tourism expenditures in the region by 10% within 3 years, participation, webhits
3) Pursue the National Heritage Area designation by the National Park Service	Counties, Northern Neck Tourism Commission	2013-2015	Feasibility study completed	NNTC, NNPDC	Federal recognition of the Northern Neck as a National Heritage Area
4) Quick win: Create 'link to' program from NNTC to industry stakeholders	NNTC, tourism industry constituents	6 months	beginning	NNTC	50% of industry stakeholders have logo/link on website or other collateral

5) Identify retiree/student with videography/scriptwriting skills	NNTC, retiree community	9 months	beginning	NNTC	video completed
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**Objective B: Develop additional public water-access points.**

1) Map public water access locations in the four counties	Northern Neck Public Access Authority, Counties	2013-2014	beginning	NNPAA, Counties	8 new or enhanced sites, including fishing piers, ramps, facilities & parking improvements
2) Develop a plan to increase use of public access sites to foster economic activity	Northern Neck Public Access Authority, Counties, NNTC	2013-2014	beginning	NNPAA, Counties	business growth around public access sites

**Objective C: Develop tourism activities with watermen and farmers.**

1) Schedule two agritourism/marine tourism training and workshops	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	# certified, # tours, new business
2) Link tours to products offered in Objective A1	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	product-tour offerings
3) Sponsor 4-H members to go to Agritourism events	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	number of attendees/meetings

Target Outcomes:

- Increase tourism expenditures in the region by 10% within 3 years, from \$232 million to \$256 million
- Increase *northernneck.org's* monthly web hits to exceed 6,000 hits per month on average by 2014
- Achieve federal recognition of the Northern Neck as a National Heritage Area in 2014

- Promote at least 50% of industry stakeholders have logo/link on website or other collateral by 2014 by creating a 'link to' program from NNTC to industry stakeholders
- Complete video on the Northern Neck by 2015
- Develop 8 new or enhanced public access sites, including fishing piers, ramps, facilities & parking improvements
- Fund three 4-H members to attend agritourism meetings by 2015

Short Term:

- Broaden knowledge among local residents and second-home owners of the local attractions
- Inform and train local customer service industry on where to find information for visitors

Intermediate: 

- Encourage local businesses and restaurants to offer Northern Neck foods, wines, and other products with a tag that can be easily recognized beyond the State of Virginia. For example, “A Product of George Washington’s Northern Neck”,
- Create a Northern Neck food trail
- Hold agritourism/marine tourism training and workshops
- Link tours to products offered in Objective #1

Long Term:

- Market the Northern Neck as a National Heritage Area
- Offer matching grant program to develop tourism assets



## Evaluation Plan

### Key Measures and Strategies to Track Progress:

Measures used to track progress include tracking outcomes attached to specific goals, surveys, and monitoring industry trends. See Appendix D: Northern Neck Plan of Action.

To continue to keep the plan fresh, working groups have been established through the Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership which extended membership to those involved in the SET program who had not previously been a part of the regional planning process. The Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership meets quarterly and will give the working groups an opportunity to report progress to the group. Goal tracking will be made public at [www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/SET.htm](http://www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/SET.htm)

### Acknowledgements

The Northern Neck Region would like to thank the staff from the United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development, Regional Rural Development Centers, and Virginia Cooperative Extension for support throughout the course of this project. We would also like to show our appreciation to Rappahannock Community College, Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership, Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Tourism Corporation, the distinguished individuals that took part in the training sessions, and numerous other individuals for their invaluable insight and ideas that led to the creation of this plan.

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## Appendix A Planning Group Members & Affiliations



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Linda Morris	Northern Neck Tourism Commission
Lee Allain	Northumberland Economic Development Commission
Bill Kling	Northumberland Economic Development Commission
Jeff Szyperski	Chesapeake Bank
Tom Richardson	Lancaster By the Bay Chamber
Jimmy Carter	VISIONS/Rappahannock General Hospital
Elizabeth Crowther	Rappahannock Community College
Rosemary Mahan	Westmoreland County Board of Supervisors
Jason Perry	Rappahannock Community College, Workforce
Morgan Quicke	Richmond County
Bob Fink	Westmoreland County
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Iris Lane	Westmoreland County School Board
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Kenneth Rioland	Macedonia Baptist Church/Business Incubator Program
E. Derwin Booker	Northern Neck Soil & Water Conservation District
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Norm Risavi	Westmoreland County
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Paul Sciacchitano	VISIONS, Economic Development Subcommittee
Nicole Thompson	King George County, Economic Development
Paul Reber	Stratford Hall
Joni Carter	VISIONS
Jim Long	Northumberland County Board of Supervisors
Regina Pencile	Northern Neck Planning District Commission
Joe Curry	Lancaster County small business owner
Gerald Howard	NAACP
John Mitchell	Rappahannock Area Health Education Center
Edie Bowles	VA Telehealth Network

## Appendix B

### Data Source from Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

Sources cited in this section include:

- U.S. Census Bureau (Decennial Census and American Community Survey)
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
- emsiAnalyst , version 2012.4
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- National Center for Education Statistics – IPEDS
- Virginia Workforce Connection/ Virginia Employment Commission



**Table 1: Population in NNPDC, by County (1990-2010)<sup>i</sup>**

	Lancaster	Northumberland	Richmond	Westmoreland
1990 Census	10,896	10,524	7,273	15,480
2000 Census	11,567	12,259	8,809	16,718
2010 Census	11,391	12,330	9,254	17,454
% of Change 1990-2010	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
<b>Regional % of Change 1990-2010</b>	<b>12.5%</b>			
<b>VA % of Change 1990-2010</b>	<b>11.5%</b>			
<b>US % of Change 1990-2010</b>	<b>8.9%</b>			

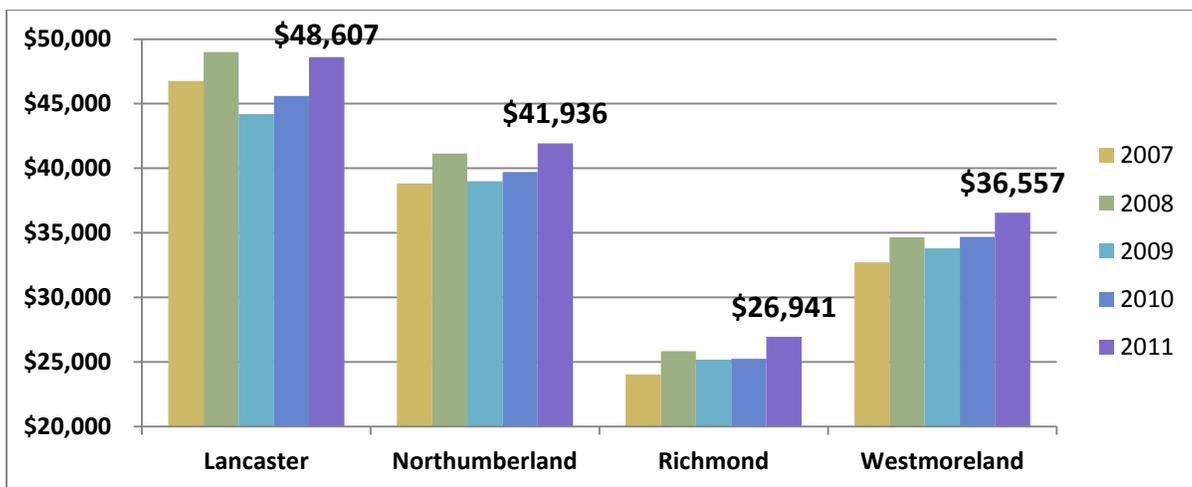
**Table 2: Population, by Age (2010)<sup>ii</sup>**

	Lancaster		Northumberland		Richmond		Westmoreland	
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
Under Age 5	4.0%	451	4.3%	525	4.3%	395	5.3%	922
5 to 9 Years	4.6%	522	4.5%	561	4.9%	452	5.4%	938
10 to 14 Years	4.7%	532	4.8%	589	4.9%	453	5.5%	956
15 to 19 Years	4.9%	561	4.8%	591	5.3%	491	6.0%	1,051
20 to 24 Years	3.7%	420	4.0%	492	5.3%	491	5.2%	915
25 to 29 Years	3.5%	401	3.8%	467	6.4%	596	5.1%	893
30 to 34 Years	3.4%	388	3.5%	432	7.0%	652	4.7%	817
35 to 39 Years	3.8%	436	3.5%	431	6.7%	624	5.1%	892
40 to 44 Years	4.7%	532	4.8%	589	7.6%	705	5.5%	968
45 to 49 Years	6.5%	736	6.6%	815	9.1%	842	7.2%	1,251
50 to 54 Years	7.7%	875	7.6%	941	7.8%	726	8.2%	1,428
55 to 59 Years	8.3%	947	7.8%	963	6.8%	627	8.2%	1,432
60 to 64 Years	9.1%	1,036	9.9%	1,221	5.6%	518	7.7%	1,346
65 to 69 Years	8.8%	997	10.0%	1,233	4.8%	446	7.1%	1,233
70 to 74 Years	7.0%	802	7.6%	942	4.2%	390	5.3%	925
75 to 79 Years	5.7%	653	5.6%	687	3.6%	333	3.9%	679
80 to 84 Years	4.5%	517	4.0%	497	2.5%	235	2.6%	449
85 Years +	5.1%	585	2.9%	354	3.0%	278	2.1%	359
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>11,391</b>		<b>12,330</b>		<b>9,254</b>		<b>17,454</b>	
<b>% of Population Age 25-64</b>	<b>47.0%</b>		<b>47.5%</b>		<b>57.2%</b>		<b>51.7%</b>	
<b>% of Population Age 65+</b>	<b>31.2%</b>		<b>30.1%</b>		<b>18.2%</b>		<b>20.9%</b>	
	<b>Virginia: 12.5%</b>				<b>U.S. Total: 13.0%</b>			
<b>% of Population Age 65+ (2000 Census)</b>	<b>28.5%</b>		<b>26.2%</b>		<b>17.7%</b>		<b>19.0%</b>	
	<b>Virginia: 11.2%</b>				<b>U.S. Total: 12.4%</b>			

**Table 3: Population, by Age and Sex (2010)<sup>iii</sup>**

	Lancaster		Northumberland		Richmond		Westmoreland	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 5	252	199	276	249	188	207	515	407
5 to 9 Years	252	270	301	260	231	221	482	456
10 to 14 Years	279	253	319	270	227	226	475	481
15 to 19 Years	304	257	321	270	263	228	536	515
20 to 24 Years	219	201	254	238	323	168	463	452
25 to 29 Years	203	198	219	248	415	181	465	428
30 to 34 Years	175	213	217	215	470	182	413	404
35 to 39 Years	200	236	209	222	437	187	429	463
40 to 44 Years	243	289	269	320	450	255	485	483
45 to 49 Years	335	401	379	436	541	301	592	659
50 to 54 Years	401	474	472	469	431	295	692	736
55 to 59 Years	446	501	433	530	314	313	669	763
60 to 64 Years	452	584	552	669	266	252	634	712
65 to 69 Years	484	513	593	640	212	234	607	626
70 to 74 Years	382	420	487	455	173	217	419	506
75 to 79 Years	307	346	346	341	137	196	329	350
80 to 84 Years	232	285	220	277	80	155	202	247
85 Years and Over	186	399	142	212	73	205	104	255
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,352</b>	<b>6,039</b>	<b>6,009</b>	<b>6,321</b>	<b>5,231</b>	<b>4,023</b>	<b>8,511</b>	<b>8,943</b>
	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>53.0%</b>	<b>48.7%</b>	<b>51.3%</b>	<b>56.5%</b>	<b>43.5%</b>	<b>48.8%</b>	<b>51.2%</b>

**Chart 1: Per Capita Personal Income (2007-2011)<sup>iv</sup>**



<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

<sup>2</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Age and Sex. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

<sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

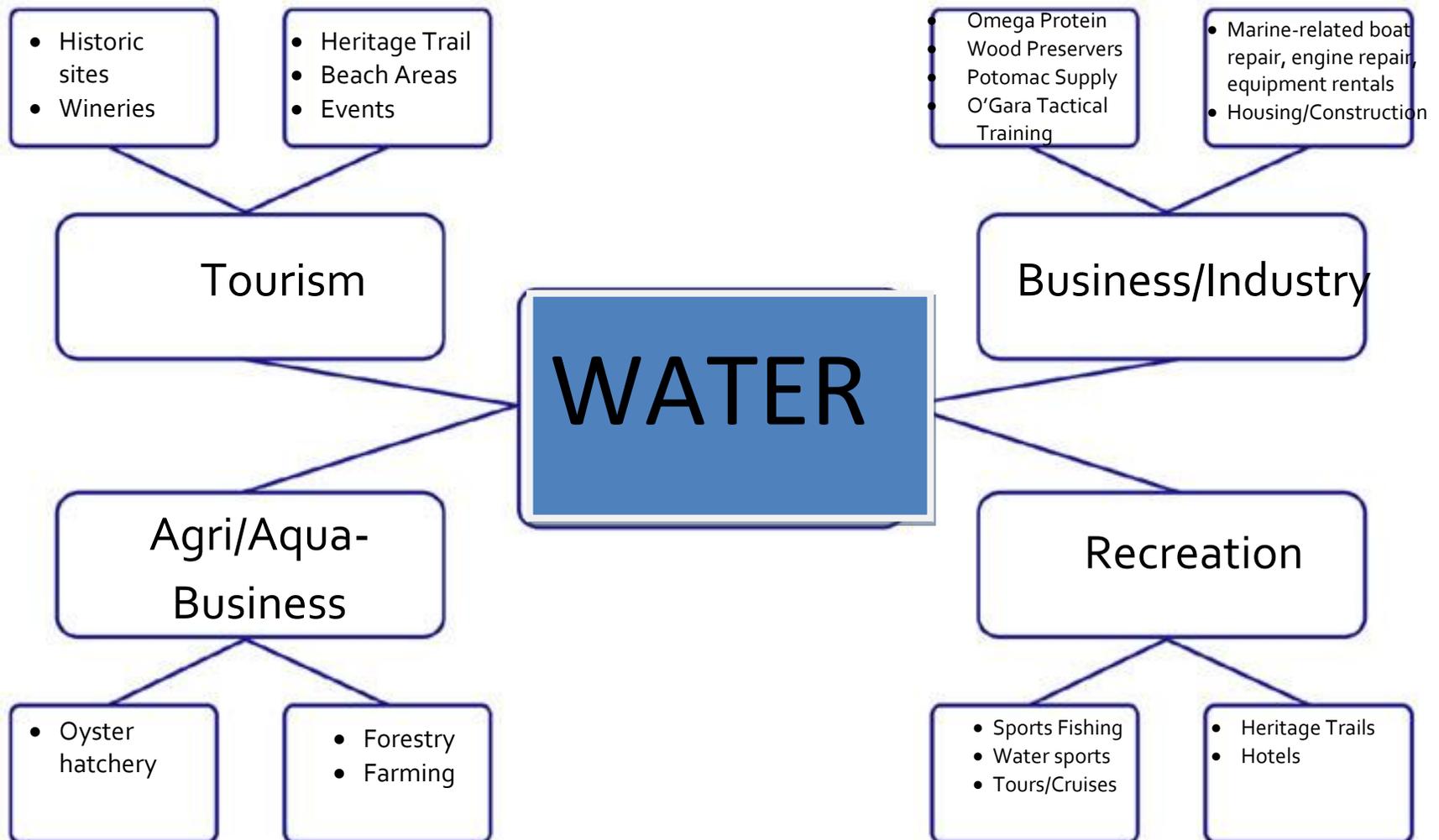
<sup>4</sup> Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. *Per Capita Personal Income, Annual, 2007-2011*. Personal income is the income that is received by persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance. This measure of income is calculated as the personal income of the residents of a given area divided by the resident population of the area. In computing per capita personal income, BEA uses the Census Bureau's annual midyear population estimates.

The complete data from the CEDs is available at [nnpdc.org](http://nnpdc.org)

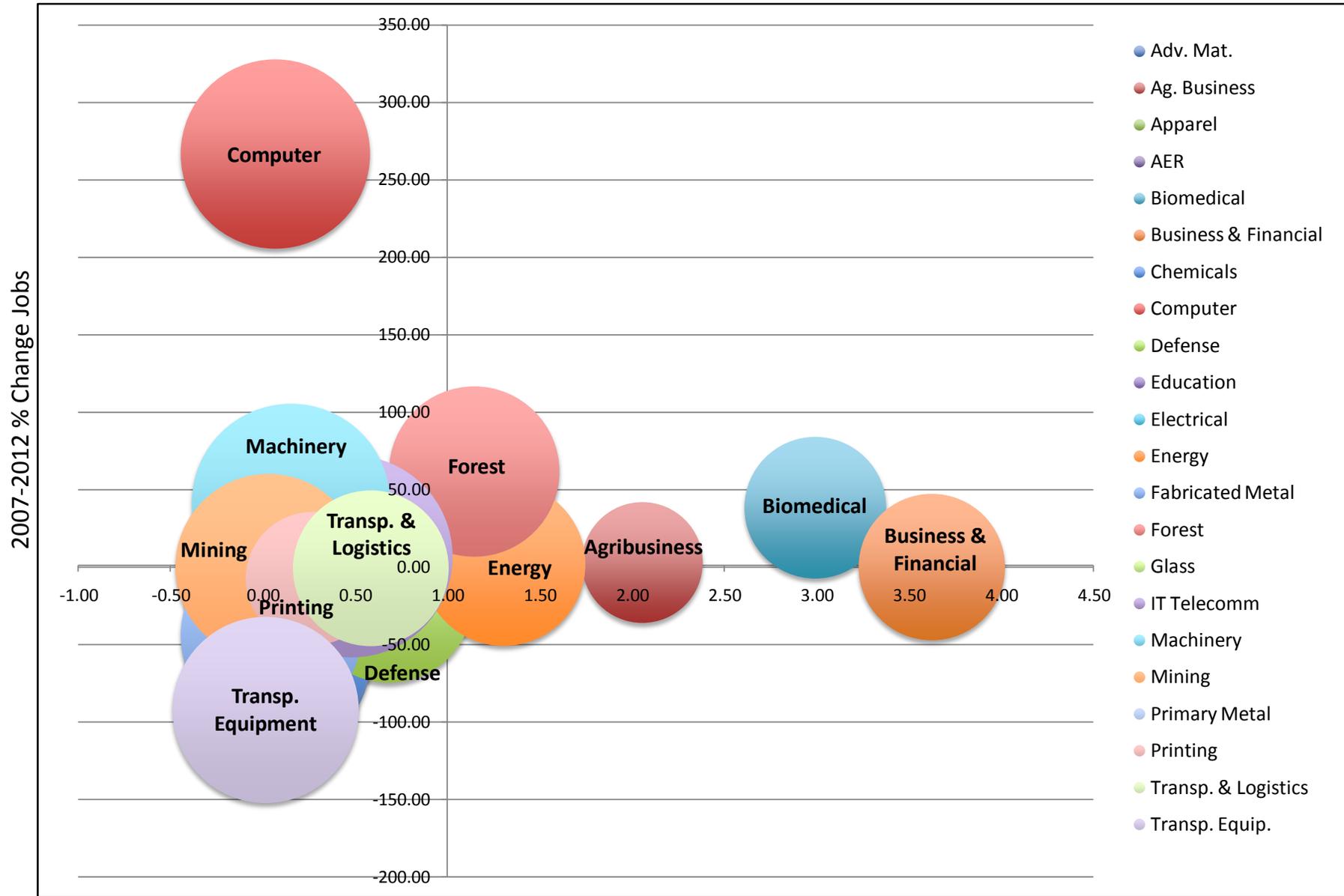
Appendix C  
Water-based Cluster and Bubble Charts



Northern Neck SET Program

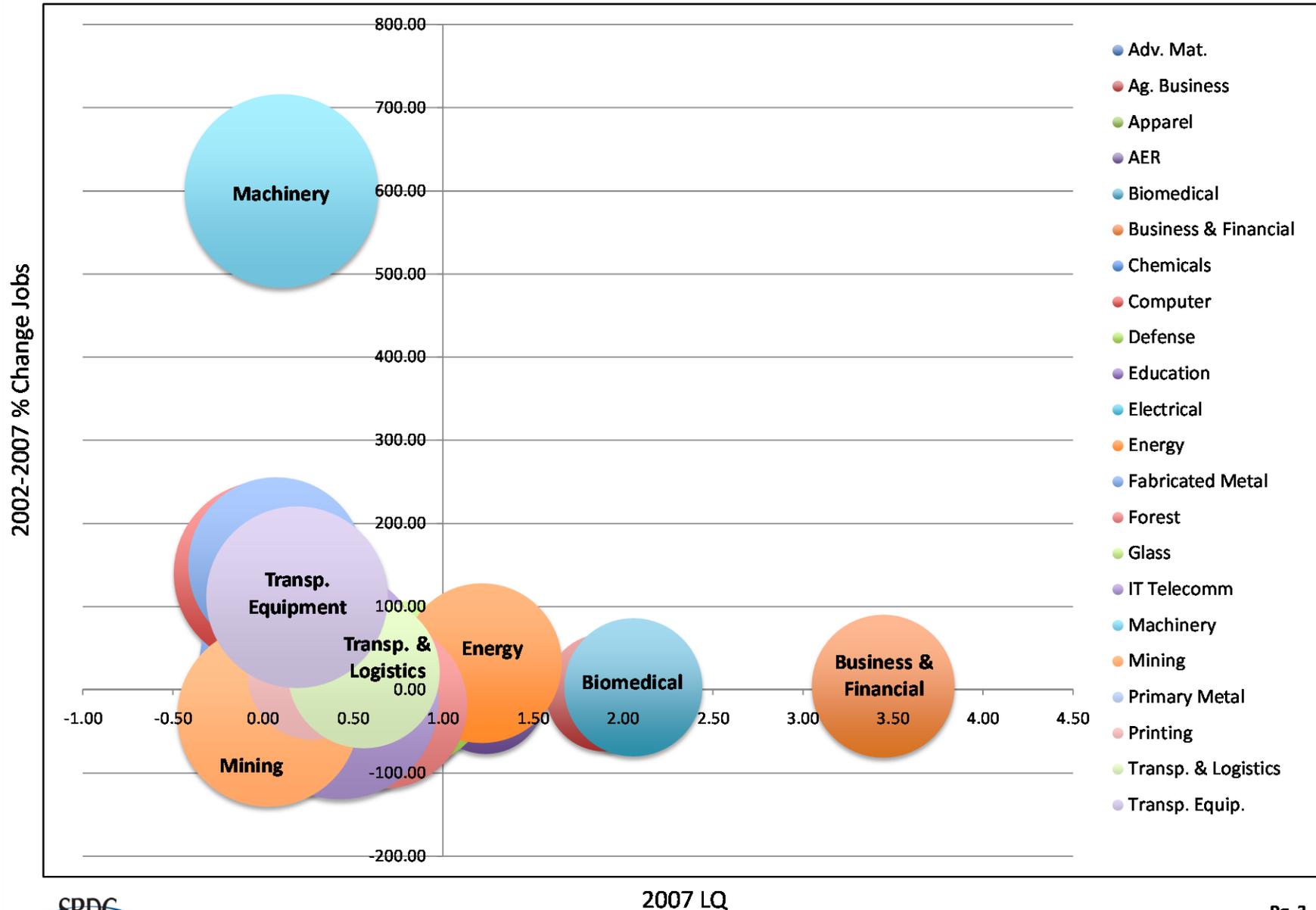


# NNCBay – Virginia (2007-2012)



2012 LQ  
 Bubble size represents cluster's average earnings in 2012; Source: EMSI Complete Employment – 2012.2

## NNCBay – Virginia (2002-2007)



Appendix D  
Northern Neck Plan of Action



Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
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**GOAL 1**

**Provide infrastructure that facilitates the expansion of existing businesses and attracts new, higher-wage industry sectors.**

*This goal recognizes that the region has to provide the infrastructure necessary for existing industry to stay competitive in a global economy and to provide a platform to develop new industry sectors in support of the region's strategic goals.*

**Objective A: Expand and improve quality of telecommunications infrastructure across four counties.**

1) Develop public-private partnership to accelerate the deployment of broadband infrastructure across the four counties.	Northern Neck Broadband Authority, MetroCast, Northern Neck WiFi, Verizon Wireless, and other providers	2013-2016	USDA loan application pending, current upgrades within service area by MetroCast	Northern Neck Broadband Authority	1) Square miles served by ISPs; 2) Number of customers served by ISPs; 3) Number of permit applications for pole installations
2) Review land-use ordinances to make it easier to obtain telecommunications-infrastructure permits	Counties, Boards of Supervisors, Planning Commissions, Land Use Offices	2013-2014	Planning Phase	Boards of Supervisors, County Administrators	Number of jurisdictions updating their ordinances

**Objective B: Improve transportation infrastructure**

1) Implement the 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan.	Counties, towns, VDOT, CTB, Bay Transit	2013-2035	Pending CTB funding	VDOT District Office and PDC	At least one project from 6-year plan completed each year
2) Develop regional bus links to connect the Bay Transit bus network.	Bay Transit	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Bay Transit, Counties, VDRPT, Federal Highway Administration	New bus routes established

3) Pursue funding for spot improvements to Route 3.	VDOT, CTB, Counties	2013-2018	Pending CTB funding	Counties, VDOT District Office, PDC	1) Number of road improvements completed; 2) Decrease in the number of accidents
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## GOAL 2

### Equip the regional workforce with the skills and flexibility needed to succeed in a technology-based economy.

*The second goal addresses the concerns of regional stakeholders for the need to improve college and career readiness and prepare citizens for a more technologically-advanced world. The centrality of the region's maritime tradition to the region's economy and self-identity suggests an emphasis on that industry cluster.*

#### Objective A: Offer additional education and training programs offered in K-12, post-secondary, and adult education and dual-enrollment programs through Rappahannock Community College and other institutions and providers

1) Develop a marine-technology and career-technical Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) Academy.	RCC, NN Technical Center, School Districts	2012-2018; The proposed beginning date is school year 2013-14 with funding being provided at the local level.	The board of education approved the proposal to establish a Governor's STEM Academy in Richmond County.	the NN Technical Center STEM Academy board	earned employment rate; # of people completing the program and gaining a credential; 100% of teachers are trained to teach their respective programs
2) Connect career-training programs to more closely match IT, maritime, and healthcare industry identified needs.	RCC, Technical Center, School Districts, VEC/WIA	Start date for formal planning -2013	Informal meetings are being held now	RCC Workforce Development and CTE	50% increase in IT certifications

3) Create a formalized "business services and needs" group for the NN region	NNCBRP, VEDA, RCC, Small business development center, Chamber of Commerce, NNPDC, VEC, WIB	Start informal planning immediately in Spring/Summer 2013 with a stakeholder meeting	groups are independently working on this that need to be brought together; each county has a local resource council that will also come together to form a regional group	WIA	complete a needs assessment by September 2013
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**Objective B: Provide access to workforce resources for students and jobseekers mastering workplace-readiness skills**

1) Schedule at least two workplace readiness and career readiness certificate programs used by local institutions at each of the two community college campuses.	RCC, Technical Center, School Districts, VEC Workforce Center, WIA (workforce investment act)	Fall 2013	Planning Phase	RCC Workforce Development	a 25% increase over the current number of people receiving these certificates in the 2013-14 school year
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**PROGRESS: RCC Fall Course Catalog, WF-2, WF-4: HVAC Career Studies Certificate and Workplace Professional Certificate**

2) Host four recognition events to promote existing certificate programs to workers and employers throughout the region.	All of the above and the chambers of commerce	Spring 2014	Planning Phase	RCC Workforce Development, VEC, and WIA	a 200% increase over the current number of businesses that recognize these certificates in the 2013-14 school year
3) Schedule two basic computer skills courses at each campus at community college.	Goodwill Foundation - provides online courses, Public Libraries, VEC, and RCC	Perhaps 2013	Some programs already exist	VEC	a 50% increase in the number of offsite courses being offered

4) Promote three soft-skills training programs throughout the region and create new ones as needed	RCC, VEC, Toastmaster, CTE, VA Tech Cooperative Extension, and Univ. of Mary Washington Small Business Development Center	2014-2015	Planning Phase; The WorldWide Interactive Network (W-WIN) now offers an online soft-skills training module	Chambers of Commerce	the courses are scheduled during off-business hours; course attendance increases by 100%
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Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
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### GOAL 3

#### Establish a business-friendly environment across the Northern Neck.

*The third goal aims to support existing businesses while building opportunities for new businesses in the region*

#### Objective A: Deliver training and resources to support existing small-businesses and potential entrepreneurs.

1) Educate the region's government agencies on regional, local and state incentives and programs that support business development through small group workshops and Resource Fair	SBDC, RCC, SCORE, VCC, Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, the NNPDC, Visions	2013-2014	Planning Phase	RCC and Visions	Number of attendees at workshops and engagement at Resource Fair
2) Promote the region's Enterprise Zone program	Counties, Chambers of Commerce, Towns, NNPDC	2013-2020	Ongoing	NNPDC	Number of Enterprise Zone applications submitted per year
3) Create a "Business Information Packet" for the Northern Neck region that includes an inventory of resources and a survey for feedback	NNPDC, Counties, Towns	2013-2014	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Number of packets requested
4) Establish at least one business incubator/accelerator per county	SBDC, RCC, VCC, Chambers of Commerce, School Districts, NNPDC	2013-2018	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Number of incubators/accelerators created

**PROGRESS:** Space rented for business incubator in Northumberland County

5) Form a team of local experts to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs with business, financial and marketing guidance	Local retirement community, Rappahannock Westminster Canterbury, local churches, SCORE	2014	Planning Phase	NNPDC	Council formed and actively assisting businesses.
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**Objective B: Establish the region as a marine-hub for the Mid-Atlantic**

1) Implement tax policy favorable to marine activities in the region	VIMS, Counties, Chambers of Commerce	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Boards of Supervisors, County Administrators	1) Number of policies implemented; 2) Number of slips available; 3) Number of water-access locations; 4) Number of boats registered
2) Develop tourism initiative with watermen, marinas	VIMS, Marina Owners, Northern Neck Tourism Commission	2013-2018	Pilot project in progress	Northern Neck Tourism Commission	Number of initiatives
3) Recruit businesses and industries where geographic proximity between Norfolk and Baltimore will be a strategic advantage	Northern Neck Tourism Commission, NNPDC	2013-2018	Planning Phase	Northern Neck Tourism Commission	Number of businesses recruited

Actions / Activities	Key Contacts	Timeline	Status	Responsible Party	Measurements
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**GOAL 4**

**Promote and protect effective and sustainable use of the region’s natural beauty, cultural amenities, and tourism opportunities.**

*The fourth goal aims to promote and protect the defining asset of the Northern Neck. The region’s economy has been anchored to the water and the land for over 200 years. Its future is still tied to these assets as part of the traditional economy as well as gateways to a new economy.*

**Objective A: Encourage local economic activity through branding and marketing**

1) Brand Northern Neck foods, wines, and other products with a tag that can be easily recognized beyond the State of Virginia. For example, "A Product of George Washington's Northern Neck"	Northern Neck Tourism Commission (NNTC), Virginia Tourism Corporation, all related private-sector owners, TLCVA.com; Westmoreland County Tourism	2013-14	beginning	NNTC	Number of producers creating Northern Neck-branded products; sales generated by Northern Neck brand.
2) Create a Northern Neck food trail	Northern Neck Tourism Commission (NNTC), Virginia Tourism Corporation, all related private-sector owners, TLCVA.com; Westmoreland County Tourism	2013-14	beginning	NNTC	Measurable increase in tourism expenditures in the region by 10% within 3 years, participation, webhits
3) Pursue the National Heritage Area designation by the National Park Service	Counties, Northern Neck Tourism Commission	2013-2015	Feasibility study completed	NNTC, NNPDC	Federal recognition of the Northern Neck as a National Heritage Area
4) Quick win: Create 'link to' program from NNTC to industry stakeholders	NNTC, tourism industry constituents	6 months	beginning	NNTC	50% of industry stakeholders have logo/link on website or other collateral
5) Identify retiree/student with videography/scriptwriting skills	NNTC, retiree community	9 months	beginning	NNTC	video completed

**Objective B: Develop additional public water-access points.**

1) Map public water access locations in the four counties	Northern Neck Public Access Authority, Counties	2013-2014	beginning	NNPAA, Counties	8 new or enhanced sites, including fishing piers, ramps, facilities & parking improvements
2) Develop a plan to increase use of public access sites to foster economic activity	Northern Neck Public Access Authority, Counties, NNTC	2013-2014	beginning	NNPAA, Counties	business growth around public access sites

**Objective C: Develop tourism activities with watermen and farmers.**

1) Schedule two agritourism/marine tourism training and workshops	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	# certified, # tours, new business
2) Link tours to products offered in Objective A1	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	product-tour offerings
3) Sponsor 4-H members to go to Agritourism events	NNTC, industry groups	2013-2014	beginning	NNTC	number of attendees/meetings

<sup>i</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

<sup>ii</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Age and Sex. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

<sup>iii</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010. Table DP-1.

<sup>iv</sup> Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Per Capita Personal Income, Annual. 2007-2011. Personal income is the income that is received by persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance. This measure of income is calculated as the personal income of the residents of a given area divided by the resident population of the area. In computing per capita personal income, BEA uses the Census Bureau's annual midyear population estimates.