INTRODUCTION

Henry County and the City of Hampton have determined that it is in their mutual interest to adopt a joint Urban Redevelopment Plan (the "Plan") to enhance economic opportunity and promote growth in their respective jurisdictions. The footprint of the Plan is centered on an area of high poverty within the City of Hampton and nearby areas in the City and in unincorporated Henry County that are well-suited to the creation of employment opportunities but are currently underdeveloped. Development of this corridor is the key to reducing the relatively high levels of poverty in the Hampton and central Henry County area. In conjunction with adoption of this Plan, the City and County will seek Georgia Opportunity Zone status for a portion of the redevelopment area, in order to attract businesses and provide quality local employment for a city and county with a higher unemployment rate than the state average. Together, redevelopment and Opportunity Zone designation will build a strong local economy.

Consistency with Adopted Plans

In 2009 Henry County and the City of Hampton adopted a twenty-year Comprehensive Plan and Community Agenda (the "Plan") as a tool for planning for the future of their community. The Plan was developed with the strong public involvement community leaders and stakeholders in the participating jurisdictions, and embodies key decisions about the future of the community.

The Community Agenda reflects our communities' vision. It is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, to communicate what is unique and important about the community and to provide an implementation program for achieving our goals. Within the Community Agenda are policies and strategies developed by the community to guide our Redevelopment Plan.

A key part of the Community Agenda is the necessity to concentrate future industrial and commercial development on the major arterial corridors in the county, as illustrated by the Plan's Future Development Map. Much of the proposed redevelopment area, surrounding the City of Hampton, is identified on the Future Development Map as a "gateway area." The focus area to the west and south of the City of Hampton, as well as the western portion of the City itself, is designated as a "regional activity center". Much of central Hampton is a "downtown" focus area. The goals and characteristics of each of these proposed components of the Redevelopment Area are discussed in more detail below.

This Redevelopment Plan reinforces the Comprehensive Plan's commercial and industrial development goal by focusing on the Highway 20 corridor, along with Hwy. 19/41. These corridors represent areas which are both the most suitable
substantial redevelopment areas in the county and the best-suited, by location and infrastructure, for application of Opportunity Zone benefits.

The Community Agenda also emphasizes the desirability of infill development in areas already served by infrastructure, such as Highway 20, and Hwy. 19/41. This Joint Redevelopment Plan seeks to infill development along the corridor between fixed anchor points, represented by areas identified as future commercial or industrial on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). These corridors offer ample existing infrastructure for promotion of business and industry.

**Boundaries of the Redevelopment Area**

The Redevelopment Area consists of the area encompassed by the city limits of Hampton, and the unincorporated area of the County to the west of Old Highway 3. This Redevelopment Area includes a spectrum of urban areas, suburban mixed use, developed properties, already-developed properties in need of redevelopment, and open parcels that contribute to the ability to redevelop the area as a congruent whole. We believe that coordinated and comprehensive redevelopment, and the strategic use of incentives, depends upon the ability to offer a uniform and integrated development scheme. Considerations of economy and efficiency demand that redevelopment and development be integrated in a manner that will alleviate the poverty and lack of opportunity that characterizes the Redevelopment area.

Much of the proposed Redevelopment Area is within or immediately adjacent to the boundaries of the City of Hampton. In 2004, Hampton identified issues characteristic of this area, and listed a number of objectives in its land use plan. Those issues and objectives remain today:

1. Redevelopment. Residents would like to see major road corridors, empty strip malls, and parts of the downtown area revitalized.

2. Employment Opportunities. There are currently few major employers or industries in Hampton. The lack of job opportunities encourages commuting into other parts of the Atlanta area.

3. Low Educational Attainment. Residents of Hampton are less likely to have completed high school than residents in unincorporated Henry County, the Atlanta area, or the state. 84% of Henry County residents have a high school diploma, compared to only 74% percent for Hampton.

4. Atlanta Motor Speedway. The Atlanta Motor Speedway, to the west of the city, brings congestion during race days, additional noise, and the attraction of non-distinct commercial uses. However, the Speedway and the largely undeveloped area surrounding it provide the City and County with the unique opportunity to develop a tourism destination and a Speedway oriented activity center.
The County’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan recognized the Hampton portion of the bulk of the proposed Redevelopment Area as an area characterized by a need for redevelopment and infill, while the commercial area to the west exhibited rapid changes in land use leading to unbalanced development. Both areas were identified for Special Attention in the land use plan, hence their inclusion in the proposed Henry/Hampton Redevelopment Area.

**Negative Conditions within the Redevelopment Area**

**Pervasive Poverty, Underdevelopment, General Distress and Blight Criterion**

**Pervasive Poverty:**

U.S. Census statistics show the 2010 population of the County to be 204,000, with 7000 living within the City of Hampton.

Henry County contains significant blocks of poverty, one of which is concentrated in and around the proposed Redevelopment Area in Hampton. Census data shows a poverty rate in the City of just under 20% according to 2010 data. Comparison of Census data over the past ten years shows the City poverty rate increasing from approximately 5% in 2000, about the state average, to the present 19.7%, well above the state average of 15.7%. This dramatic increase in absolute and relative poverty rates is reflected in the recent identification of the Hampton/Henry area’s census block group as a high poverty area by the Department of Community Affairs. National data for that same period show an increase in poverty rate from 12.2 to 13.5%, or a rate of increase of only 9.5%. Based on this data, it is evident that poverty in Hampton and the surrounding area of the County is increasing at several times the national rate. The proposed Redevelopment Area is intended to slow, and ultimately reverse, this unfortunate trend.

*Source: US Census 2000, 2010*

**Underdevelopment:** The Redevelopment Area is characterized by underdevelopment, robbing the City and County of employment opportunities. Much of the Hampton area has changed from a rural community to a suburb of Atlanta in the past three decades, as reflected in a virtual doubling of the City’s population since 2000. Recent data on Hampton’s workforce shows a mean travel time to work of over one-half hour, above the state average, reflecting commutes into the urban center of the Atlanta area, rather than local employment opportunity. Development and redevelopment of the Redevelopment area to build a local core of good-paying business and industrial jobs is essential to the long-term welfare of Hampton and Henry.
Between 2000 and 2004, Henry County's annual unemployment rate averaged 3.5%, compared with the state's average of 4.4%. Those ratios have changed. As of December, 2011 the County unemployment rate had nearly tripled, to 9.9%, a figure which is now above the statewide rate of 9.4%. Enhancement of job opportunities in the Redevelopment Area is essential to correcting this trend.

A balanced community strives to have at the very minimum one job for every household in its jurisdiction. A ratio of 1.5 jobs per household is considered ideal, since more than one person on average in any household works. Bedroom communities typically have low ratios, which require a large proportion of their residents to commute outside of the area for employment, hence the relatively long commutes characteristic of the County. Henry County's jobs to housing balance was estimated at 0.95 five years ago, and given projected employment and household figures the ratio is predicted to worsen. Community leaders have stressed that the community's future vision is one where the jobs-housing balance is improved and employment opportunities for local residents are consistent with their job skills, reducing commutes and improving quality of life by bringing employment into the community. The projections described here point out the need for active economic development of the underdeveloped portions of the Redevelopment Area.

Three conditions generally characterize the design of the Hampton/Henry Redevelopment Area:

1. Increasing the supply of available land for industrial development. The County's industrial parks are running out of available sites for future expansion. This is partially a result of success and a result of poor land management practices. In order to continue to attract more industry, the Redevelopment Area identifies and includes prime industrial and office sites for future growth.

2. Diversification of economic base. Henry County has seen a dramatic decrease in the number of manufacturing jobs and the role of manufacturing in the overall economy. The Redevelopment Area is designed to attract a mix of commercial, office and industrial users to the eastern portion of the County and to the City of Hampton, improving the diversity of the employment base.

3. Enhancement of lagging retail services. Due to the rapid growth of residential areas, Henry and Hampton have developed into bedroom communities of Atlanta. Residential growth has outpaced retail development, so there is a lack of local commercial services to support the growth in residential development. The Redevelopment Area emphasizes provision of ample retail space to support the existing population and prepare for the increase expected to be generated by the economic improvement of the area.

The following are summaries of the goals and underdevelopment characteristics of the areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan that will be
included, in whole or in part, in the Redevelopment Area. We are adopting and implementing this Redevelopment Plan to re-energize these areas as viable local employment centers:

**DOWNTOWN HAMPTON AREA:**
Goals: Downtown should include a relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area. Residential development should reinforce the traditional town center through a combination of rehabilitation of historic buildings in the downtown area and compatible new infill development targeted to a broad range of income levels; including multi-family town homes, apartments, lofts, and condominiums where appropriate. Residential densities should help support and sustain downtown businesses. Design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. The pedestrian-friendly environment should be enhanced by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly rail/bike routes linking to neighboring communities and major destinations; such as libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, parks, schools, etc. New residential and commercial development should be concentrated in and around the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods on infill sites.

**Characteristics of the Downtown Area:**

**Economic Underutilization of Developable Land:** The land in this area consists of a mix of developed parcels with scattered undeveloped properties. A significant proportion of developable land within Hampton, about 34% is vacant or underutilized with respect to potential density, type of development and/or resulting market and taxable values. Residential uses in the area are under pressure to transition or redevelop to commercial uses.

**Structural Age and Deterioration:** The majority of the retail buildings are out of date and have become somewhat dilapidated as a result of the passage of time and frequent use. Blight in the area is an increasing problem. Attached as Appendix A are photographs of dilapidated, vacant and substandard structures within the area, taken during a recent ground survey. These photographs are illustrative of the increasing problems in the area caused, in whole or in part, by deteriorating economic conditions and increasing poverty in the Redevelopment Area.

**Inefficient and Obsolete Commercial Design and Layout:** The commercial centers and freestanding structures in this area are inefficient with respect to site use and density. While many have been rehabilitated some are considered unattractive with respect to current retailer standards and obsolete with respect
to consumer market appeal. There are a large number of driveways exacerbating traffic congestion. Parking is inefficient, and store frontage and signage are below current market standards and design.

Underachievement as Employment Center: As discussed in detail above, the Redevelopment Area has failed to generate the manufacturing and industrial job base commensurate with the population of the City and County. The county’s relatively small number of manufacturing jobs and the daily outflow of about a large proportion of its workforce speak volumes about the failure of the Redevelopment Area to achieve success as an employment center.

Regional Activity Center (to the West of Hampton)

Goals: Concentration of regionally marketed commercial and retail centers, office and employment areas, higher education facilities, low- to mid-rise residential, and sports and recreational complexes. Should include relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area diverse mix of higher-density housing types, including multi-family town homes, apartments, lofts, and condominiums, including affordable and workforce housing should be included in these areas. Design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses and direct connections to nearby networks of greenspace or trails.

Characteristics of the Regional Activity Center:

Economic Underutilization of Developable Land: Residential uses in the area are under pressure to transition or redevelop to commercial uses.

Structural Age and Deterioration: The majority of the retail buildings are out of date and have become somewhat dilapidated as a result of the passage of time and frequent use. Blight in the area is an increasing problem. Attached as Appendix A are photographs of dilapidated, vacant and substandard structures within the area, taken during a recent ground survey. These photographs are illustrative of the increasing problems in the area caused, in whole or in part, by deteriorating economic conditions and increasing poverty in the area.

Inefficient and Obsolete Commercial Design and Layout: The commercial centers and freestanding structures in this area are inefficient with respect to site use and density. While many have been rehabilitated some are considered unattractive with respect to current retailer standards and obsolete with respect to consumer market appeal. There are a large number of driveways exacerbating traffic congestion. Parking is inefficient, and store frontage and signage are below current market standards and design.
Underachievement as Employment Center: As noted above, the Atlanta Motor Speedway, to the west of the city, is vibrant on race days but lags as a well-developed employment center. The Speedway and the largely undeveloped area surrounding it provide the City and County with the unique opportunity to develop a tourism destination and a Speedway oriented activity center. The areas to the southeast of the city are ideally suited for development as commercial/industrial/office environments, but at present are contributing little or nothing to the employment base.

Hampton Municipal Gateway Area

Goals: The area adjacent to Hampton and surrounding the city has a character that is more reflective of the municipality than the unincorporated county area. This area includes properties that are likely to be considered for future annexations. In this area, Hampton and the County will work together when making land use, zoning, environmental quality, transportation, wastewater, public safety, and community facility decisions for the betterment of both jurisdictions. A clear boundary should be established between city and county, where is it is obvious when one enters a municipality.

General Distress and Blight Criterion:

The decline in the housing market nationally has affected many of the families in the City and County. Even those who have not been laid off in the current recession have experienced frustration and financial distress at being unable to market or sell their homes at an acceptable price. As noted above, poverty in the County has shown a dramatic rise since the onset of the economic recession, with the poverty rate growing at about four times the national average.

The examination of building permits issued by the City of Hampton over the past few years demonstrates the dramatic and continuing effect of the downturn in the local economy.

Crime statistics in the area indicate the spread of economic distress as the area’s poverty rate has increased. Hampton police reports for the past three years, while showing an overall small decrease in complaints handled, have shown significant increases in crimes associated with poverty and distress, such as counterfeit money, entering auto, fraud, stolen property and stolen vehicles.

Community’s Land Use Objectives

The Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the land use objectives for the City and County. Existing land uses in the redevelopment areas consist of agricultural, commercial, industrial and residential uses. The City and County Zoning Ordinances categorize land uses into discreet districts.
Zoning
Zoning in the redevelopment area spans several different zoning districts, including several different residential zoning categories.

Description of Parcels to be Acquired
The Redevelopment Plan does not require any parcels to be acquired by the city or county at this time, though the county’s Development Authority has recently acquired some properties in the proposed Redevelopment Area. If circumstances should change such that property acquisition becomes a probability, is desired or necessary, the plan will be amended to reflect these changes.

Structures to be Demolished or Rehabilitated
There are no structures anticipated to be demolished. The plan will be updated in the event any changes occur in future actions.

Plan to Leverage Private Resources for Redevelopment

Opportunity Zone:
The City and County have identified several resources by which to encourage development in the target area. Upon adoption of the Redevelopment Plan, Hampton and Henry will seek to establish an Opportunity Zone to include the Redevelopment Area. Opportunity Zones are intended to encourage economic development and redevelopment in specific geographic areas being served by existing economic development programs. Resources from the State of Georgia are directed towards pockets of poverty and supplemented by federal programs administered by the Department of Community Affairs. The maximum job tax credit, the use of tax credits against 100 per cent of an entities tax liability and withholdings, and the application to all business development will be beneficial in enhancing redevelopment within the proposed area.

Other Local Incentives:
The Henry County Development Authority and the Hampton Downtown Development Authority are actively engaged in the promotion of Henry and Hampton as locations for retail, commercial, office and industrial employers.

Strategy for Relocating Displaced Residents
The City and County have determined that a relocation strategy is not necessary at this time, as the city is targeting unoccupied blighted or underdeveloped areas...
and therefore no relocation of residents should occur due to the Plan. Should the need arise and the displacement of residents becomes necessary in the future, the Plan shall be amended to include a relocation plan/strategy for displaced residents.

**Covenants and Restrictions to be placed on Properties**

No covenants or restrictions will be placed on properties at this time.

**Needed Public Infrastructure**

**Strategy for Implementing the Plan**

Upon adoption by the Hampton City Council and the Henry County Commission, the City and County will be the implementing entities for the Redevelopment Plan.

Implementation Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Public Hearings</td>
<td>March, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adoption of Urban Redevelopment Plan</td>
<td>March, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish Opportunity Zone</td>
<td>April, 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote and Offer incentive packages for new businesses</td>
<td>May, 2012</td>
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Appendix