

VISION STATEMENT

Our Historic Past...

James City County is a place of firsts. It was home to the first permanent English settlement in America and the first colonial government on the continent. From this region grew a powerful and prosperous collection of colonies that would eventually free itself from English rule and form a new nation. Because of this proud heritage, James City County is a place of special significance, not only for its residents, but also for citizens across the Commonwealth of Virginia and the United States. Given the importance of our unique historical identity, we have a responsibility to preserve and protect our assets for future generations.

This responsibility translates into preserving the quality of life in James City County through wise planning, policy-making, and legislation. We will manage growth and balance the needs of development with infrastructure, transportation, the quality of our schools, and the availability of water. We will continue the tradition of first-class education, medical care, public safety, recreation, and entertainment that have already been woven into the fabric of our community. But our mission does not end there.

Our Sustainable Future...

James City County also recognizes the importance of sustainability, which aims to leave the County in good shape – economically, socially, and ecologically – for all present and future residents and visitors. To this end, we will work to preserve the green spaces and wetlands that lend their beauty to our County and support the health of our ecosystem. We will cooperate with private conservancies and landowners to protect these spaces. Residential units will be thoughtfully and logically placed and provide a wide range of choice. Industries that offer quality employment opportunities and that are compatible with the County's goals will be encouraged. Well-placed and well-planned commercial establishments will add to both the character and economy of our County. We will work to improve opportunities for all of our residents, and pay special attention to those most in need or at risk. We will strive to develop new jobs and career opportunities within our County, and to provide our population with the best possible education and training so that our citizens may fully realize these opportunities. Finally, a safe, efficient transportation network for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists will meet the everyday needs of our residents while at the same time fully integrating James City County with the rest of Hampton Roads and Virginia.

These actions will be implemented to the benefit of all County residents. James City County will uphold its identity as an exceptional area to visit and a special place to live and work.

FOREWORD

Citizen commentary is the centerpiece of comprehensive planning. Judging by the majority of the comments received from residents and other community members, citizens agree that James City County is a special place worth protecting. They recognize the need to manage growth, protect the natural environment, and preserve the character of the area. This provides a mandate to the James City County government to manage growth while preserving the County's natural beauty, improving education, providing superior public services, and maintaining a healthy economy. The *Historic Past, Sustainable Future* Comprehensive Plan is written with these goals and objectives in mind.

James City County is famous around the world as the centerpiece of a unique, broader historical area which encompasses land important in the early history of our nation: Jamestown, site of the first permanent English settlement, founded in 1607, Williamsburg, the Colonial Capital of Virginia between 1699 and 1780, and Yorktown, which was the site of the decisive battle of the American War for Independence in 1781.

The three jurisdictions – James City County, York County, and the City of Williamsburg – have an obligation to collaborate on policies, programs, infrastructure, and land use to preserve this celebrated Historic Triangle.

Implementation, monitoring, and maintenance will continue to be essential to the success of this and future comprehensive plans. Upon the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Board of Supervisors, it will be necessary to implement the plan through prioritization in the Strategic Master Plan and reliance on it throughout the development process. Reporting mechanisms will be used to communicate progress on various actions.

The goals, strategies, and actions outlined in the Comprehensive Plan are not static. As conditions in the area change and new issues emerge, the Board may need to reconsider and alter the Plan. For this reason, James City County reviews its plan every five years.

An effective plan will depend on a commitment to regular reviews and updates. Properly done, these periodic reviews will serve to refresh memories, incorporate additional citizen opinion, and provide for an accounting of successes, shortcomings, and changes that have occurred in the County. Regular reviews also encourage elected and appointed officials, County staff, the development community, the business community, citizens and citizen groups, and others who live, work, and play in James City County to focus their attention on the major steps needed to implement the goals, strategies, and actions found in the plan.

The Comprehensive Plan is a powerful tool that can be used to aid in guiding decisions, solving problems, and improving the quality of life in James City County. Ultimately, the plan will be judged by the results it generates and how the plan takes shape in our community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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