

STATE OF THE CITY 2010
HILTON GARDEN INN - SUFFOLK CONFERENCE CENTER

SUFFOLK...CHARTING OUR COURSE FOR THE FUTURE
(INTRODUCTION PROVIDED BY WARD ROBINETTE, PRESIDENT OF TOWNEBANK)

THANK YOU, WARD, FOR THOSE KIND WORDS. TO ALL OF YOU, GOOD AFTERNOON, AND WELCOME TO THE CITY OF SUFFOLK! WE ARE A CITY WITH A MISSION, AND I CAN SAY UNEQUIVOCALLY, WE ARE SUCCEEDING WITH THAT MISSION, **AS WE CHART OUR COURSE FOR THE FUTURE.**

YES, IT'S BEEN A CHALLENGING, EVENTFUL YEAR AS WE ALL NAVIGATE *UNCHARTED WATERS*, BOTH ON A LOCAL, STATE, NATIONAL AND WORLDWIDE LEVEL, BUT WE CAN'T WAIT ON THE SHORELINE AND EXPECT THE STORM CLOUDS TO PASS OVER US – WE MUST CONTINUE THE COURSE WE'VE SET TO ACHIEVE OUR GOALS. TO QUOTE AMERICAN AUTHOR AND HUMORIST MARK TWAIN, "YOU WILL BE MORE DISAPPOINTED BY THE THINGS THAT YOU DIDN'T DO THAN BY THE ONES YOU DID DO. SO THROW OFF THE BOWLINES. SAIL AWAY FROM THE SAFE HARBOR. CATCH THE TRADE WINDS IN YOUR SAILS. **EXPLORE. DREAM. DISCOVER.** LET'S SEE HOW IN SUFFOLK WE'VE DONE JUST THAT OVER THIS LAST YEAR.

VIDEO

WATCHING THAT OVERVIEW, I AM AGAIN REMINDED OF HOW PROUD AND HUMBLED I AM TO BE SUFFOLK'S FIRST DIRECTLY ELECTED MAYOR, HAVING LIVED IN THIS AMAZING CITY SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

THE SUFFOLK STATE OF THE CITY IS PRESENTED BY THE HAMPTON ROADS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, AND ON BEHALF OF EVERYONE HERE, I'D LIKE TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIRELESS EFFORTS AS THE VOICE OF BUSINESS IN PROMOTING OUR REGION AND OUR COMMUNITY. YOU ARE TRULY **FIRST-RATE.**

AS MAYOR AND THE **HELMSMAN** OF THIS SHIP, I AM REMINDED HOW CRUCIAL A TEAM EFFORT IS AS WE TREAD THROUGH THESE CHALLENGING ECONOMIC TIMES, AND SO I AM DELIGHTED TO BE JOINED BY ALL OF MY COLLEAGUES ON THE SUFFOLK CITY COUNCIL, *AND WOULD ASK THAT THEY ALL STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED ONCE AGAIN.*

WE'RE FORTUNATE IN THAT OUR CITY HAS BEEN MORE PROTECTED FROM THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN COMPARED TO SOME OF OUR NEIGHBORS, BUT WE DON'T LIVE ON AN ECONOMIC ISLAND AND THERE IS NO TRUE SAFE HARBOR FROM THE RIPPLE EFFECT WE ALL FACE, HOWEVER, TOGETHER WE HAVE CHOSEN TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES HEAD ON. **THE PESSIMIST COMPLAINS ABOUT THE WIND; THE OPTIMIST EXPECTS IT TO CHANGE; THE REALIST ADJUSTS THE SAILS.**

YOU KNOW, THE DEFINITION OF A "**PILOT**" IS A SPECIALLY KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSON QUALIFIED TO NAVIGATE A VESSEL THROUGH DIFFICULT WATERS, AN APT DESCRIPTION OF OUR CITY MANAGER, SELENA CUFFEE-GLENN – *AND I'D ASK THAT SHE STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED* – ALONG WITH HER **CREW**, THE DEDICATED EMPLOYEES OF THE CITY OF SUFFOLK. THEY'VE TAKEN ON THE TASK OF ADJUSTING OUR SAILS, AND I'M PROUD TO SAY WITH MUCH SUCCESS.

LIKE SO MANY FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES TODAY, WE ARE TIGHTENING OUR BELTS TOO, AND FINDING WAYS TO DO MORE WITH LESS. HOWEVER, AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE NOT COMPROMISING OUR COMMITMENTS TO THOSE WE SERVE. WE'RE UTILIZING CREATIVE APPROACHES TO STRETCH OUR DOLLARS, AND CUTTING COSTS WITHOUT CUTTING CORNERS. WE'RE BEING JUDICIOUS WITH OUR CHOICES AND CAREFUL WITH OUR RESOURCES, WHILE CONTINUING TO MOVE BOLDLY FORWARD.

IN THIS FISCAL YEAR ALONE WE WILL HAVE SAVED OVER A HALF A MILLION DOLLARS BECAUSE OF RELOCATING SEVERAL CITY DEPARTMENTS FROM PREVIOUSLY LEASED SPACES AND REPURPOSING OTHER LOCATIONS. WE ALSO ANTICIPATE SAVING ON ENERGY COSTS AT OUR NEWLY RENOVATED HUMAN RESOURCES BUILDING DUE TO THE REPLACEMENT OF HVAC EQUIPMENT WITH NEW, ENERGY EFFICIENT AIR HANDLERS MADE POSSIBLE THROUGH A \$473,000 IN STIMULUS FUNDS GRANT AWARDED TO THE CITY FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY.

THIS YEAR CITY STAFF HAS DILIGENTLY RESEARCHED AND SOUGHT EVERY DOLLAR AVAILABLE TO AUGMENT OUR BUDGET, BUT WE'VE ALSO BEEN CAUTIOUS NOT TO USE FEDERAL FUNDING THAT WILL LATER REQUIRE SUBSTITUTION USING CITY DOLLARS. IN FACT, STIMULUS DOLLARS FLOWING TO OUR COMMUNITY TOTALLED \$16 MILLION DOLLARS FOR EDUCATION AND OTHER CITY ACTIVITIES OR INITIATIVES. THESE PROJECTS HAVE CREATED AND PRESERVED JOBS WHILE PROVIDING MAXIMUM BENEFIT TO THE OVERALL ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE CITY.

LAST YEAR WE ADVISED THAT OUR CITY MANAGER'S FOCUS ON THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE CITY'S ECONOMIC PORTFOLIO HAS HELPED SEND THE MESSAGE THAT *"SUFFOLK IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS"*, AND MANY NEW BUSINESSES HAVE CHOSEN TO CALL SUFFOLK HOME AS WE'VE BECOME A CITY OF CHOICE BASED IN LARGE PART ON THE WONDERFUL QUALITY OF LIFE PROVIDED TO OUR CITIZENS.

LET ME ALSO ADD THAT OUR *"DIVERSIFICATION"* IS WHAT HAS ALSO HELPED INSULATE US FROM SOME OF THE ISSUES MANY CITIES ARE NOW FACING. BECAUSE OF OUR KEEN MARKET INSIGHT AND PRUDENT FINANCIAL PLANNING, IT'S EVIDENT THAT IN SUFFOLK, **WE'RE CHARTING OUR OWN COURSE FOR THE FUTURE.** WE'VE GOTTEN OUR 26TH CONSECUTIVE EXCELLENCE IN FINANCIAL REPORTING GRADE, BUT PERHAPS THE GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT IS RECEIVING THE *FIRST DISTINGUISHED BUDGET AWARD* – TRULY REMARKABLE GIVEN THIS STORMY CLIMATE. I'D LIKE TO RECOGNIZE THE STAFF OF BUDGET AND STRATEGIC PLANNING, AND ASK THAT ANNE SEWARD, OUR BUDGET OFFICER, *STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED* FOR THIS EXCEPTIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT.

WITH SO MUCH GOING ON IN OUR CITY, IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE KEEP EVERYONE INFORMED. OUR PROGRESSIVE MEDIA & COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT HAS DEVELOPED A MULTITUDE OF INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO ENGAGE, INFORM AND INVOLVE OUR CITIZENS. IT'S EVIDENT THAT THROUGH OUR FACEBOOK PRESENCE ALONE WITH OVER 2500 FANS VISITING ALMOST 800 TIMES A WEEK, FOLKS TRULY APPRECIATE HAVING ACCURATE, EASY TO ACCESS, UP-TO-THE MINUTE NEWS AT THEIR FINGERTIPS.

WHETHER **EXPLORING** OUR QUAIN T VILLAGES OR OUR CITY'S RICH HISTORY AND HERITAGE – OUR NATURE LOVER'S PARADISE AND AMAZING PARKS – OUR 8,000 ACRES OF PRISTINE LAKES AND MILES OF RIVERFRONT – OR OUR EVER EVOLVING CULTURAL ARTS PROGRAMS THAT ADD TO OUR QUALITY OF LIFE, WE TRULY OFFER THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS. *SMALL TOWN CHARM AND HOSPITALITY IN THE MIDST OF CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION.*

YES, SUFFOLK IS WHERE **DREAMS** AND VISIONS BECOME REALITY. PERHAPS SOME OF THE GREATEST DREAMERS ARE THOSE ENTREPRENEURS WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO OWN THEIR OWN BUSINESSES – TRULY OUR MODERN DAY VISIONARIES – SOME OF WHO WE HEARD FROM EARLIER IN OUR VIDEO. THEIR FAITH AND OPTIMISM UNDERSCORES AND VALIDATES WHAT A LOT OF US HERE ALREADY KNOW, AND THEY HAVE CERTAINLY HELPED TO CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE CHANGES IN OUR COMMUNITY.

SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE ENGINE OF OUR ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND THEY CREATE AND MAINTAIN GOOD LOCAL JOBS EVERY DAY, EMPLOYING HALF OF ALL PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES.

BY SUPPORTING THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT WANT TO BE PART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND SHOPPING AND DINING LOCALLY, WE KEEP MORE DOLLARS IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY, FUNDING IMPORTANT SERVICES.

I WOULD LIKE TO RECOGNIZE SUFFOLK'S 2009 SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AS NAMED BY THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 1FOOT 2FOOT, THE FIRST INTEGRATED FOOT AND ANKLE FACILITY IN THE COUNTRY TO INCLUDE A COMPREHENSIVE PODIATRY PRACTICE, MEDICAL SPA, FASHION COMFORT SHOE STORE, AND PHYSICAL THERAPY GYM. DR. MATTHEW DAIRMAN'S BUSINESS IS ALSO UNIQUE IN THAT THEIR \$2.5 MILLION INVESTMENT IN THE RESTORATION AND TRANSFORMATION OF A FORMER DOWNTOWN 1920'S MOVIE THEATER WAS ALSO A RECENT RECIPIENT OF THE HAMPTON ROADS ASSOCIATION FOR COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE DESIGN AWARD. CONGRATULATIONS ON BOTH COUNTS, DR. DAIRMAN!

ALL BUSINESSES NEED A WELL-EDUCATED, WELL-TRAINED WORKFORCE. I AM PROUD TO SAY THAT THIS PAST SUMMER'S WORK PROGRAM, FUNDED BY OPPORTUNITY, INC. PROVIDED 77 LOCAL YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH A CHANCE TO WORK AND GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE IN SEVERAL CITY DEPARTMENTS. HERE THEY DEVELOPED SKILLS MANY NEVER EVEN KNEW THEY POSSESSED, BOLSTERED THEIR SELF-CONFIDENCE, POLISHED THEIR JOB SEEKING EXPERTISE AND ADDED TO THEIR RESUME – ALL WHILE EARNING A DECENT WAGE. ONLY A **DREAM** FOR MANY BEFORE THE EXISTENCE OF THIS PROGRAM. IN THE WORDS OF ONE OF THE PARTICIPANTS, "IT'S JUST A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE TO GIVE YOUNG PEOPLE A CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE." I COULDN'T AGREE MORE.

IT'S BEEN SAID THAT EDUCATION IS THE KEY TO THE AMERICAN DREAM. IN SUFFOLK, WE HAVE PROVIDED THE KEYS THAT WILL IN FACT GIVE OUR CHILDREN THE ABILITY TO OPEN DOORS THAT IN YEARS PAST WOULD HAVE BEEN INCONCEIVABLE – DOORS TO INDEPENDENCE, RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPECT. WE ARE A REGIONAL AND STATE LEADER IN IDENTIFYING TECHNOLOGY TRENDS AND RESOURCES WITH THE GREATEST IMPACT ON INSTRUCTION, AND ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE MANY OF OUR AREA'S MODELING

AND SIMULATION BUSINESSES PLAYING A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THAT PROCESS. YES, EVERY STUDENT IS A STAR, AND IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO HELP THEM SHINE.

THROUGH INITIATIVES SUCH AS OUR SUFFOLK OFFICE ON YOUTH AND SUFFOLK YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL – OF WHOM SEVERAL DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS ARE JOINING US AS USHERS TODAY – WE'RE ENSURING THAT OUR YOUTH HAVE A VOICE IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND THE SKILLS NEEDED TO BECOME THE CIVIC LEADERS OF TOMORROW.

YES, SUFFOLK IS THE IDEAL PLACE TO LIVE YOUR **DREAMS**. JUST ASK NEWLY SWORN SUFFOLK POLICE OFFICER ANGELA MCRAE, WHOM WE HEARD FROM EARLIER IN OUR VIDEO, WHO RECENTLY ACHIEVED HER LIFELONG DREAM OF BECOMING A POLICE OFFICER. LEARNING ABOUT SUFFOLK WHILE ATTENDING A GOOD MORNING AMERICA JOB FAIR IN ATLANTA, THIS DETERMINED 60-YEAR OLD RETIRED FROM A 30-YEAR CAREER AS A FINANCE MANAGER WITH MARS CANDY CORPORATION, AND DIDN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE AGE, DISTANCE, OR STRENUOUS PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS STOP HER FROM REALIZING HER DREAM AND HER DESIRE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. MS. MCRAE, WE APPLAUD YOU, AND WELCOME YOU TO SUFFOLK'S LAW ENFORCEMENT FAMILY.

INDEED, SUFFOLK IS HOME TO THE FINEST LAW ENFORCEMENT AND FIRE & SAFETY PROFESSIONALS IMAGINABLE. AS YOU'VE HEARD ME SAY SINCE MY EARLY DAYS ON COUNCIL, PUBLIC SAFETY IS CRITICAL TO OUR GROWTH AND WELL BEING AS A CITY. IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW MANY HOMES WE BUILD, BUSINESSES WE ATTRACT OR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES WE CREATE, IF OUR CITIZENS DON'T FEEL SAFE, WE HAVE DONE NOTHING.

IN FACT, PARTNERING WITH THE COMMUNITY IS ONE OF THE BEDROCK PRINCIPLES OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SWORN TO SERVE AND PROTECT OUR CITIZENS. NOWHERE IS THIS PARTNERSHIP MORE EVIDENT THAN IN OUR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT CELEBRATIONS. EARNING THE FIRST PLACE NATIONAL DESIGNATION FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TOWN WATCH FOR OUR POPULATION CATEGORY FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR, OUR COMMUNITIES ARE UNITED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CRIME IN THIS WONDERFUL EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WHEN WE ALL WORK TOGETHER TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL. WHEN NEIGHBORS LOOK OUT FOR NEIGHBORS, AND OLD-FASHIONED VALUES ONCE AGAIN TAKE CENTER STAGE.

LAST YEAR'S EVENT WAS MADE EVEN MORE SPECIAL AS WE ALSO OFFICIALLY CUT THE RIBBON ON THE NEW POLICE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING TO COINCIDE WITH OUR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT CELEBRATION, FURTHER EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANT ALLIANCE THIS FACILITY HAS WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY.

LATER THIS SPRING WE'LL BE CUTTING THE RIBBON AT THE NEW KING'S FORK PUBLIC SAFETY CENTER, WHICH INCLUDES A FIRE STATION, OFFICES FOR SUFFOLK FIRE DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION AND THE SUFFOLK EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER. THIS NEW FACILITY UNDERSCORES OUR CONTINUING OBLIGATION TO THE SAFETY OF OUR CITIZENS IN SERVING OUR EVER-GROWING COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

I'D LIKE TO THANK ALL OF OUR PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICERS FOR THEIR TREMENDOUS DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY, *AND ASK THAT THEY STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED.*

IN SPEAKING ABOUT OUR CITY'S GROWTH AND CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT, I WOULD BE REMISS IF I DIDN'T ALSO MENTION THE STEPS WE'VE TAKEN TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT WE ARE ABLE TO RESPOND TO OUR FUTURE NEEDS FOR WATER, NOT ONLY IN THIS DECADE, BUT ALSO FOR THE NEXT FORTY YEARS. IN NEGOTIATIONS YEARS IN THE MAKING, SUFFOLK AND ISLE OF WIGHT, WHO JOINED FORCES TO FORM THE WESTERN TIDEWATER WATER AUTHORITY, BROKERED A DEAL WITH NORFOLK LATE LAST SUMMER TO ENSURE THAT WE HAVE A LONG-TERM ANSWER FOR THIS MOST BASIC NEED.

TO MEET THE ONGOING HEALTHCARE NEEDS OF OUR CITIZENS, LAST SUMMER ALSO SAW THE OPENING OF OUR NEW HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BUILDING – A CATALYST IN THE REBIRTH OF THE FAIRGROUNDS AREA OF SUFFOLK AND THE CONTINUED RENAISSANCE OF OUR DOWNTOWN. HOUSING THE SUFFOLK DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND OUR SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THIS LEED CERTIFIED, ENERGY EFFICIENT “GREEN” BUILDING ALSO INCLUDES A LIGHTED, LANDSCAPED PARK AND WATER FEATURE, COMPLETE WITH A WALKING TRAIL FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF THE COMMUNITY. THIS FACILITY IS TRULY A “ONE STOP SHOP” FOR THOSE PERSONS SEEKING ASSISTANCE, AND HAS PROVIDED ENHANCED HEALTH, HOPE AND HEALING FOR OUR CITIZENS.

ANOTHER BRIGHT SPOT IN THE FAIRGROUNDS AREA ARE THE LOFTS AT EAST POINT – ONCE JUST A **DREAM** FOR TOM POWELL AND THE FOLKS AT MONUMENT CONSTRUCTION, LLC – AND NOW A SHINING ILLUSTRATION OF THE HISTORIC ADAPTIVE REUSE OF A 150 YEAR OLD WAREHOUSE INTO OFFICE, POTENTIAL RETAIL AND CUTTING-EDGE LOFT-STYLE APARTMENTS. INDEED, A TESTAMENT TO WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WHEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTORS SHARE A VISION FOR THEIR COMMUNITY.

AND MORE IS YET TO COME, AS ASSOCIATED CONTRACTING SERVICES, INC. WILL SOON BE BUILDING MUCH NEEDED AFFORDABLE SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES IN THE FAIRGROUNDS AREA.

ALSO COMING SOON IN THIS BUSTLING CORRIDOR IS THE NEW HOME OF SUFFOLK'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, WHO WILL BE SETTING UP SHOP IN THE HISTORIC PHOENIX BANK, ONE MORE GREAT INSTANCE OF RENOVATING YESTERDAY'S LANDMARKS TO SERVE TODAY'S BUSINESSES IN THE GATEWAY TO DOWNTOWN.

AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF BUSINESSES, LET'S TALK ABOUT THE MULTITUDE OF NEW BUSINESSES WHO HAVE **DISCOVERED** WHAT WE'VE BEEN SAYING FOR YEARS NOW, **“IT'S A GOOD TIME TO BE IN SUFFOLK”**.

YES, WE'VE HAD LOTS OF EXCITEMENT HERE SINCE I DELIVERED THE STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS LAST SPRING – FROM RIBBON CUTTINGS, TO GRAND REOPENINGS AFTER THE 2008 TORNADO THAT CAUSED IN EXCESS OF \$28 MILLION IN DAMAGE, TO MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS OF LARGE COMPANIES WHO'VE MADE THE DECISION TO CALL SUFFOLK HOME.

WE'VE ALSO HAD HEARTENING NEWS WHEN LONGTIME SUFFOLK BUSINESS *GOLDEN STATE FOODS* REVERSED THE SHUTDOWN OF THEIR WILROY INDUSTRIAL PARK FACILITY, AS ANOTHER PURPOSE WAS FOUND FOR THE BUILDING, ITS ASSETS AND ALMOST ALL OF ITS ORIGINAL EMPLOYEES. FANTASTIC NEWS FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES, AND THE COUNTLESS LOCAL CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS THE COMPANY ASSISTS.

INDEED, EVEN IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES, THERE'S LOTS OF GOOD NEWS TO REPORT. CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN 2009 TOTALED **\$112 MILLION DOLLARS**, WITH EXISTING INDUSTRY BRINGING IN \$78 MILLION, AND NEW BUSINESSES ACCOUNTING FOR \$34 MILLION. LET'S NOT FORGET THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE BEHIND THESE NUMBERS, TOO, WITH **510** JOBS CREATED. EXISTING INDUSTRY ACCOUNTED FOR 148 NEW JOBS, WHILE NEW BUSINESSES BROUGHT 362 NEW JOBS TO OUR CITY. ALSO, CONSIDER THE 296,890 NEW SQUARE FOOTAGE DEVELOPED TO MEET GROWING BUSINESSES' NEEDS, AS WELL AS THE 319,267 NEWLY OCCUPIED AND REDEVELOPED SQUARE FOOTAGE.

SUFFOLK IS DEFINITELY **OPEN FOR BUSINESS**, FROM THE SMALLEST "MOM AND POP" OPERATIONS, TO THE LARGEST CORPORATIONS. WE'VE ALSO DEVELOPED NUMEROUS PROGRAMS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION TO ASSIST SMALL BUSINESSES AS THEY "START AND GROW THEIR SUFFOLK BUSINESS", FROM FREE WORKSHOPS TO ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS. *THE CURRENT ECONOMY PROVIDES NEW CHALLENGES – AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.* OUR **DREAM** IS THAT ALL BUSINESSES THRIVE AND PROSPER. SHARING THAT VISION IS KEVIN HUGHES, OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, WHOM WE HEARD FROM IN OUR VIDEO, *AND I WOULD ASK THAT HE STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED.*

YOU KNOW, I THINK THE GREATEST TESTAMENT TO JUST HOW FRIENDLY SUFFOLK IS FOR BUSINESS IS EVIDENT BY THE MANY EXISTING BUSINESSES THAT DECIDED NOT TO *ABANDON SHIP*, BUT TO EXPAND – YES, *EXPAND* – OR UNDERTAKE A MAJOR RENOVATION OR RE-INVESTMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY IN THESE CHALLENGING TIMES. THESE INCLUDE:

- BASF – THE CHEMICAL COMPANY
- OBICI HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION
- SENTARA OBICI HOSPITAL
- HILTON GARDEN INN & SUFFOLK CONFERENCE CENTER
- ATS
- SYSCO FOODS OF HAMPTON ROADS
- FREEDOM PLAZA, WHICH WAS DEMOLISHED BY THE TORNADO AND COMPLETELY REBUILT
- STALLINGS & BISCHOFF, P. C.
- ABNB
- SUPREME FOODS
- CHKD
- WESTERN TIDEWATER CLINIC
- FARM FRESH, THIS EVENT'S GOLD SPONSOR
- ENTERPRISE RENT-A-CAR
- HAMPTON ROADS SANITATION DISTRICT
- AMADAS INDUSTRIES

- SEPCO
- FLEXA FURNITURE
- FARMERS BANK
- DAVIES COMMERCIAL MASONRY
- S. J. MOORE INTERIORS
- ALLSTATE INSURANCE IN THE SUFFOLK SHOPPING CENTER
- TRIPLE T SPORTS CENTER, WHO WE HEARD FROM EARLIER –
- NORTHROP GRUMMAN, WHO HAS EXPANDED THEIR PRESENCE HERE AND RECENTLY INVESTED \$5 MILLION IN A NEW, 3-STORY, FACILITY IN HARBOUR VIEW, WHERE THEY'LL CONTINUE TO SUPPORT JOINT MILITARY TRAINING IN A CENTRALIZED LOCATION STRATEGICALLY LOCATED IN THE CENTER OF HAMPTON ROADS AND NEAR THE U. S. JOINT FORCES COMMAND;
- AND THE PEPSI BOTTLING GROUP. YES, PEPSI HAS BEEN IN SUFFOLK SINCE THE EARLY 1900'S, AND HAS ENJOYED THEIR STAY SO MUCH THAT THEY DEMOLISHED THEIR OLD BUILDING, AND BUILT A NEW, 11,000 SQUARE FOOT DISTRIBUTION FACILITY STRATEGICALLY LOCATED TO SERVE THEIR CUSTOMERS IN SOUTHAMPTON, ISLE OF WIGHT AND SUFFOLK. IN THE WORDS OF RON LEWIS, PEPSI'S UNIT SALES MANAGER, "WE LOOK FORWARD TO SERVING THE SUFFOLK MARKET FOR ANOTHER 100 YEARS".
- CONGRATULATIONS ARE ALSO IN ORDER FOR UNILEVER LIPTON, WHOSE PLANT HERE CELEBRATES A 55-YEAR RELATIONSHIP WITH SUFFOLK. THEY ARE THE LARGEST TEA PROCESING FACILITY IN THE UNITED STATES, AND HAVE RECENTLY ACHIEVED THEIR GOAL OF BECOMING A "ZERO-LANDFILL" FACILITY. THIS FACILITY SENDS NO WASTE TO LANDFILLS AND PROCESSES ALL OF THEIR WASTE THROUGH AGGRESSIVE RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING PROGRAMS, AND BY CONVERTING SOME OF THEIR WASTE INTO USABLE ENERGY. AT THE RATE THEY'RE GOING, THEY'LL NEED TO EXPAND FURTHER JUST TO CREATE A WING TO HOUSE THEIR HONORS AND AWARDS, HAVING RECENTLY ALSO RECEIVED THE GOLD 2010 GOVERNOR'S ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARD!

WE'VE ALSO BEEN *BUOYED UP* BY THE FOLLOWING NEW BUSINESSES WHO HAVE PUT DOWN *ANCHOR* IN SUFFOLK:

- TOWNE BANK, TODAY'S PRESENTING SPONSOR, AND THEIR NEW \$6.5 MILLION DOLLAR HARBOUR VIEW BANKING CENTER OFFERING A WIDE ARRAY OF FINANCIAL SERVICES
- HILTON GARDEN INN SUFFOLK/CHESAPEAKE, WITH 135 ROOMS AND OVER 4,000 SQUARE FEET OF CONFERENCE SPACE
- ALLFIRST

- VERIZON WIRELESS, STARBUCKS, NORTHERN STAR CREDIT UNION, SUBWAY, YOYO SUSHI AND REACTION HAIR SALON IN THE HARBOUR VIEW SHOPPES
- APPLIED TECHNICAL SYSTEMS, INC. – A CERTIFIED SERVICE DISABLED VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESS;
- HOUFF LOGISTICS
- 7-ELEVEN
- NORTHGATE 10
- BURGER KING
- 546 CONSTANCE ROAD, HOME TO NTELOS AND WASHLAND
- EAST POINT PLAZA
- AAA SERVICE CENTER
- RT. 17 OFFICE PARK
- GENERAL SERVICES COMPANY, INC.
- WORLD CLASS GYMNASTICS “TOO”
- WEST WASHINGTON LOFTS, THE FIRST LEED CERTIFIED REDEVELOPMENT IN SUFFOLK
- CHESAPEAKE REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER
- ALELO
- SERVEPRO
- SLUGGERS INDOOR BATTING CAGE
- GODDESS INSPIRED
- ANYTIME FITNESS
- AMERICA’S BEST
- MERRILL’S DESSERTS
- COMMAND POST TECHNOLOGIES
- FAMILY FOOT AND ANKLE CARE IN THE SENTARA BELLEHARBOUR COMPLEX
- BAYVIEW MEDICAL
- AND COBHAM COMPOSITE PRODUCTS, WHO SELECTED SUFFOLK AFTER A 32-CITY SITE SELECTION SEARCH. THEY’LL BE INVESTING \$9 MILLION, AND WILL CREATE 200 NEW JOBS OVER A 5-YEAR PERIOD IN THEIR NEW FACILITY, WHICH MANUFACTURES COMPOSITE PARTS FOR THE AEROSPACE AND DEFENSE INDUSTRY. ACCORDING TO VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER PAUL OPPENHEIM, THEY CHOSE SUFFOLK IN PART BECAUSE OF OUR “HIGHEST VALUE OF INCENTIVES, OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LIVING, CLOSE PROXIMITY TO EXCELLENT ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS AND HIGH TECHNOLOGY-SKILLED AND DISCIPLINED WORKFORCE.”

EVIDENT THROUGHOUT OUR EXPANDING AND NEW BUSINESSES ARE THE VAST NUMBER OF HEALTHCARE CHOICES NOW AVAILABLE IN OUR CITY. IT'S OBVIOUS THAT NOT ONLY ARE WE A GROWING CITY, BUT ALSO WE'RE A CITY WHO CARES ABOUT THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ITS CITIZENS.

RIVERFRONT FAMILY MEDICINE AND SPECIALTY CARE AND NORTH SUFFOLK FAMILY MEDICINE BOTH RECENTLY OPENED NEW PRIMARY CARE PRACTICES IN NORTHERN SUFFOLK.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF THE KING'S DAUGHTERS MEDICAL GROUP OPENED A NEW 7,000 SQUARE-FOOT PRIMARY CARE PRACTICE – NANSEMOND PEDIATRICS – NEAR SENTARA OBICI HOSPITAL.

SPEAKING OF SENTARA OBICI HOSPITAL, THEIR NEW 65,000 SQUARE FOOT, \$22.4 MILLION DOLLAR BED TOWER ADDITION WILL BE OPENING EARLY THIS SUMMER, AND CLEARLY NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON. THE ADDITION NOT ONLY EXPANDS THE HOSPITAL'S CURRENT CAPACITY, BUT ALSO PROVIDES FOR FUTURE EXPANSION TO ENSURE THAT THEY CONTINUE THEIR LEGACY OF SERVING THE HEALTH NEEDS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS.

IN THE TRADITION OF AMEDEO OBICI AND HIS LEGACY OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO MEDICAL CARE FOR ALL, THE OBICI HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION RECENTLY OPENED THEIR NEW 7,000 SQUARE FOOT FACILITY IN FRONT OF THE SUFFOLK CENTER FOR CULTURAL ARTS. THE FOUNDATION OFFICE WILL SERVE AS A RESOURCE FOR NON-PROFITS IMPROVING HEALTH BY HOSTING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP BUILD MANAGEMENT CAPACITY AND OFFER MEETING SPACE FOR HEALTH-RELATED INITIATIVES.

GROWING TO BETTER SERVE WESTERN HAMPTON ROADS IS BON SECOURS HEALTH CENTER AT HARBOUR VIEW – TODAY'S BRONZE SPONSOR – AND THE OUTPATIENT DESTINATION FOR THOUSANDS OF AREA RESIDENTS EACH YEAR. IN RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS, HIGHLY UTILIZED SERVICES ARE RELOCATING AND EXPANDING TO MEET PATIENT DEMAND AND FURTHER FULFILL THEIR MISSION OF PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE OUTPATIENT CARE CLOSE TO HOME. IN FACT, THEY'LL BE CELEBRATING THE EXPANSION INTO THE HARBOUR VIEW MEDICAL ARTS BUILDING ON APRIL 29TH WITH A GRAND OPENING AND RIBBON CUTTING.

WE CANNOT TALK ABOUT OUR CURRENT BUSINESS CLIMATE WITHOUT MENTIONING THE IMPACT THAT THE MODELING AND SIMULATION INDUSTRY HAS HAD ON OUR GROWTH – ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTHERN CORRIDOR OF OUR CITY. THE ENERGY AND EXCITEMENT IS PALPABLE. SUFFOLK IS PROUD TO HOST A MAJOR PIECE OF JOINT FORCES COMMAND, WHERE TODAY YOU WILL SEE THE FLAG OF ITS' COMMANDER, GENERAL JAMES N. MATTIS, FLYING OVER THE COMPLEX.

WE ARE HONORED TO BE THE LOCATION OF CHOICE FOR A NUMBER OF HIGH-TECH FIRMS WORKING WITH THE UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND, AND WE'VE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO ESTABLISH A TECHNOLOGY ZONE TO FURTHER ENCOURAGE THIS SECTOR TO DEVELOP AND DIVERSIFY IN OUR CITY.

VMASC NOW OFFERS A FULLY FUNCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY INCUBATOR PROGRAM, KNOWN AS THE VMASC TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS

ACCELERATOR, OR VTBA. THE VTBA CURRENTLY HOSTS TWO NEW TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES UTILIZING THIS PROGRAM, ALELO AND COMMAND POST TECHNOLOGIES. OTHER TENANTS AT THE VMASC ACCELERATOR INCLUDE MAK TECHNOLOGIES, CAE, ITA, VMD INC., CRAIG TECHNOLOGIES AND GFM INC. SOUNDS LIKE I'VE JUST RECITED THE ENTIRE ALPHABET, I KNOW, BUT FURTHER PROOF OF JUST HOW LARGE THIS INDUSTRY HAS GROWN IN SUFFOLK! TECHNOLOGIES DEVELOPED BY THESE COMPANIES HAVE BEEN OF TREMENDOUS INFLUENCE IN CURRENT FOREIGN CONFLICTS INVOLVING IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN, AND WE'RE HONORED TO HAVE THEM IN OUR CITY AND PROUD OF THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR MILITARY FORCES.

WE'RE ALSO PROUD OF SUFFOLK'S "2010 FIRST CITIZEN HONOREE" AS NAMED BY THE SUFFOLK ROTARY CLUB AND NORTH SUFFOLK ROTARY CLUB – DOUG NAISMITH – AND I'D ASK THAT HE STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED. DOUG IS THE LONGEST-SERVING PRESIDENT AT NANSEMOND-SUFFOLK ACADEMY, HAVING ALSO HAD A VARIED CAREER WITH THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY IN ADDITION TO SERVING IN THE U. S. NAVY AS AN OFFICER ASSIGNED TO A DESTROYER AND WORKING IN DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS CITY ARE IMMEASURABLE, AND ALTHOUGH OFFICIALLY "RETIRED", DOUG STILL FINDS TIME TO BE ACTIVE ON NUMEROUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS WHICH ADD TO THE QUALITY OF LIVES FOR MANY OF OUR CITIZENS. HE SUMS UP HIS SERVICE AS FOLLOWS, "I WAS BROUGHT UP TO FEEL THAT EVERYONE WHO WAS ABLE SHOULD CONTRIBUTE IN SOME WAY TO THEIR COMMUNITY. IF YOU HAD SOMETHING TO OFFER, THERE WAS AN OBLIGATION TO DO SO." AN ETERNAL OPTIMIST, DOUG BELIEVES THAT THINGS WILL TURN OUT FOR THE BETTER, BUT THAT IT DOESN'T HAPPEN BY ITSELF. IT TAKES PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING TO WORK HARD TO MAKE IT HAPPEN. IN THE WORDS OF THE LATE EDWARD KENNEDY, "THE WORK GOES ON, THE CAUSE ENDURES, THE HOPE STILL LIVES AND THE DREAMS SHALL NEVER DIE". SO, TOO, DOES THE WORK, HOPES AND DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE OF THIS GREAT CITY.

THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH FOR JOINING US TODAY. IN CLOSING, I SUBMIT TO YOU THE CURRENT STATE OF OUR CITY IS STRONG. IT'S CLEAR TO SEE THAT IN SUFFOLK, WE DIDN'T SIMPLY WEATHER THE STORM. *SINCE WE COULDN'T CHANGE THE WIND, WE ADJUSTED OUR SAILS.* AS WE CONTINUE TO **EXPLORE, DREAM AND DISCOVER** THE CHALLENGES OF THIS NEW DECADE, LET'S NOT FORGET THAT OUR CHARACTER IS DEFINED NOT BY THE CHALLENGES WE ENCOUNTER, BUT BY HOW WE RESPOND TO THESE CHALLENGES. WITH THE COURSE WE'VE CHARTED, ***I SEE WONDERFUL THINGS ON OUR HORIZON.***