PORTSMOUTH PARTNERSHIP

Promoting economic growth, leadership and education within the City of Portsmouth

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Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor

Mr. Kevin Page, Rail Transportation Chief, Va. Department of Rail and Public Transportation

HIGH SPEED RAIL PLAN OUTLINED

A REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS' meeting of the Greater Norfolk Corp., Portsmouth Partnership, Virginia Beach Visions, Chesapeake Alliance and Suffolk Tomorrow was held on March 17 at Norfolk's Town Point Club to discuss the future of High Speed Rail for passenger service in Virginia, and the importance of a High Speed Rail connection to the Hampton Roads area. Kevin Page, Chief of Rail Transportation for the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, presented the overview to an audience of approximately 80 members.

THE PROPOSED Southeast high Speed Rail Corridor extends from Washington, DC, to Charlotte, NC. It will, where possible, utilize existing infrastructure and rights of way as it upgrades track to allow top speeds of 110 mph, and average speeds of about 85 mph, over improved rail beds which will be shared with freight traffic. The goal of the initiative is for passenger rail travel to compete effectively with air and auto alternatives for trips of 100-500 miles' distance.

MR PAGE CREDITED members of the Greater Norfolk Corporation and their counterparts in Virginia Beach with successfully pressing the USDOT, in 1993, to include Hampton Roads in the USDOT's 1992 High Speed Rail plan. Today, while progress on the North-South route is proceeding apace, **Hampton Roads must, once again, press for inclusion in the High-Speed network** through a Richmond-Newport News link, a Petersburg-Norfolk link, or both. A set of **public hearings to be held later this spring** will give our Hampton Roads cities, businesses and citizens the opportunity to once more champion our case for inclusion in this vital network.

Additional information can be found at www.drpt.virginia.gov and www.sehsr.org.

MAYOR DELIVERS "STATE OF THE CITY" MESSAGE

JOE SCHARL, Chairman of the Portsmouth Division of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce, welcomed guests to hear Mayor James W. Holley, III's annual "State of the City" address as they enjoyed lunch at Portsmouth's Renaissance Hotel on March 14. This year's DVD presentation featured interviews with TCC President Deborah DiCroce, Portsmouth Partnership board member David Tynch, Schools Superintendent David Stuckwisch, Portsmouth Development Director Steve Lynch and others in its wide-ranging report.

Joe Scharl and Mayor Holley

GPDC **10** years **1,000** jobs **$8,000,000** tax revenue