

Gloucester County, Virginia

Three Year Strategic Plan

2018 Update



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County Administrator's Introduction

The alignment of local government staff activities and work products with the vision and priorities of its governing body is a vital part of an effective local governance model. To this end, the Gloucester County Board of Supervisors undertook an in-depth process to explore, define and document its long term vision for the community and establish priorities to guide staff action in support that vision. The final result of the planning process produced a three year Strategic Plan that was intended to memorialize the Board's priorities and instigate necessary actions to support fulfillment of the Board's vision for Gloucester County.

This strategic plan was developed through the following (abbreviated) steps:

- The Board of Supervisors held a facilitated retreat in January 2015, at which the Board drafted a Vision Statement for 2035 and established three-year Strategic Priorities. While select supervisors drafted a preamble for the Board's consideration, the County Administrator engaged staff to create action steps for an implementation plan.
- The Board held a public hearing in March 2015 to seek citizen input on the draft Vision Statement for 2035, taking action to approve and adopt the document thereafter.
- The County Administrator then held a Strategic Planning Retreat with appropriate staff in March 2015, dividing staff into focus area teams within which action steps were developed and assigned to each of the Board's Strategic Priorities. The action steps were then reviewed by the full group of staff representatives and appended to the Vision Statement and Strategic Plan document.
- The Strategic Plan, comprised of the Board's Vision Statement for 2035 and their expressed Strategic Priorities, along with staff's Action Plans to achieve those priorities appended, was presented to the Board in April 2015, and the Board of Supervisors held a public hearing in June of that year to solicit community input. Following the public hearing, the Board adopted the document.

The Board held a retreat in January 2018 during which the Strategic Priorities were reviewed and updated to ensure continuing alignment with the Board's intent. This updated Strategic Plan document, comprised of the Board's Vision Statement for 2035 and [draft] Strategic Priorities (as amended) was presented to the Board of Supervisors in April 2018, illustrating changes made at the recent retreat and others recommended for the Board's consideration by the County Administrator. The Board approved (by consensus) a request for authorization to advertise a public hearing in May 2018 to solicit public input on the Strategic Plan document (as amended). Following the public hearing, the County Administrator prepared a final draft of the Strategic Plan incorporating all edits endorsed by the Board, presenting said draft to the Board at their May 15, 2018 meeting, during which the Board took action to adopt.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS VISION for 2035

Founded in 1651, Gloucester County has a rich and varied history that includes Werowocomoco, the cultural and political center of the Powhatan Confederacy; Revolutionary War battlefields; and the homes of Dr. Walter Reed, and early civil rights activist T. C. Walker. Today, Gloucester citizens enjoy the beauty of a rural Virginia countryside, while remaining within a short commute of the activities and shopping opportunities offered by metropolitan Hampton Roads.

Moving towards the future, Gloucester will benefit from steady and consistent economic growth enabled by a robust infrastructure, business-friendly government and a top-notch public education system. Gloucester's citizens will enjoy a wealth of recreational activities, shop locally at numerous and varied markets and stores, and have access to county-based, world-class health care. Gloucester will offer all the amenities of modern life, while continuing to surround its citizens with the tranquility of rural and waterfront living.

Gloucester is, and will continue to be, "The Land of the Life Worth Living."

Gloucester Enjoys a Diverse, Thriving Economy

Gloucester County has become the destination of choice for entrepreneurs looking for a qualified and stable workforce, affordable real estate, and a relaxed and fulfilling lifestyle.

- Gloucester businesses are enabled by low taxes and an accommodating and collaborative regulatory environment.
- The Highway 17 Corridor contains business parks offering white-collar companies spacious and well-appointed offices supported by a robust fiber-optic broadband network.
- Numerous industrial parks have been developed off the highway, providing light industries with the infrastructure and space needed for rapid growth.
- Gloucester, the historic home of the Chesapeake Bay watermen, has become the East Coast hub for a burgeoning aquaculture industry.
- Gloucester's combination of numerous retail businesses, best-in-state medical facilities and unlimited outdoor recreational activities, attracts thousands of customers daily from the surrounding counties of the Middle Peninsula.

Education

Gloucester County provides the opportunity for all of its citizens to have a quality education.

- The collaborative relationship between the Board of Supervisors, School Board, and citizens ensures the availability of a superior lifetime education for everyone.
- The County offers quality education in academic, technical, vocational and life skills.
- Gloucester high school graduates are well-prepared for either workforce entry or continuing on to a higher education.

Infrastructure

Gloucester County has efficient and strategically placed roads, water, sewer, broadband, and natural gas that supports desired business growth and a high quality of life.

- Universal broadband access provides citizens with an opportunity to work where they live and supports the growth of home-based entrepreneurs.
- A Second Crossing over the York River provides easy access for customers and tourists in the Williamsburg area to the shops and attractions of Gloucester County.
- Cooperative efforts with VDOT and regional agencies have provided Gloucester with an expanded transportation infrastructure, including well-maintained rural roads and numerous bicycle paths, pedestrian walkways, and alternative transportation options.

Community Services

Gloucester County, through a combination of government, commercial and volunteer programs, ensures that the needs of its citizens – children, adults and the elderly – are met.

- Several adult community centers provide the opportunity for Gloucester citizens to age in place, to be cared for locally near their homes and families.
- Continued investment in Gloucester facilities results in Walter Reed Hospital becoming the Middle Peninsula Regional Medical Center, providing world-class health care to all the residents of the Middle Peninsula.
- The combination of numerous, active charitable organizations, the inherent, giving spirit of the Gloucester citizens, and supplemental assistance from state and local government, ensures that our most needy citizens - the homeless, indigent, disabled – are never alone and never without help.

Housing and Land Use

Gloucester County maintains its essential character as a rural county while offering diverse housing opportunities that include a range of multi-family and single family homes that meet the needs of singles and families of all ages and incomes.

Natural and Recreational Resources

Gloucester County is unique among its peers because of the abundance and diversity of its natural resources, including clean protected waterways, forested landscapes, wildlife, and the longest coastline in the state of Virginia.

- An expansive and well-maintained park system provides numerous recreational opportunities for Gloucester citizens and visitors, including sports venues, hiking, hunting, boating and fishing.
- Active protection and conservation measures ensure a healthy ecosystem that will attract new residents and businesses, as well as enhance tourism.
- Well-equipped marinas and boat ramps throughout the County ensure recreational boaters easy access to Gloucester's numerous waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.
- Gloucester's Werowocomoco National Park attracts thousands of visitors annually to the premier Native American historical site on the East Coast.

Governance

Gloucester County focuses on finding and implementing the leanest form of government to minimize impediments to economic development and take advantage of collaborative processes, shared services, and other cost effective measures for the maximum benefit of its citizens.

- Taxes are maintained at the lowest practical levels that still provide essential, quality services.
- Gloucester County has a transparent, responsive, and forward-thinking government that encourages an informed and participatory citizenry.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS 3-YEAR PRIORITIES

Identified by the Board of Supervisors on January 23, 2018

Thriving Economy

1	Implement the County's economic development strategic plan to attract new businesses and assist existing businesses in the County (with BOS support) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure continued support to working watermen and encourage aquaculture• Attract a good size industry to the County with a significant number of jobs• With the EDA, identify develop, and enhance opportunities for small businesses and new businesses off Route 17
2	Establish a streamlined one step business license process with a focus on enabling entrepreneurial growth in the County. Develop flowchart for self-service attainment and offer a turnkey option targeting a 10 day turn-around on delivery of business licenses
3	Do an in-depth review of County ordinances and eliminate or reduce regulations that inhibit or delay growth of business. Determine state statutory minimum requirements for our local ordinances by chapter with a focus on identifying and reducing impediments to business growth
4	Collaborate with state and federal agencies to reduce state-imposed regulations related to development (i.e. unfunded mandates, legislation to allow special taxing districts, etc.)

Education

1	Continue to increase and enhance the quality of joint meetings between the Board and School Board in order to increase cooperation and joint planning success <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold a joint retreat annually in the summer
2	Expand community use of schools to leverage the investment in the school system, including uses that expand: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Career/technical/vocational skills training• Mid-career or retraining for adults
3	Explore additional workforce development options for the County

Infrastructure

1	Enable the proliferation of broadband services throughout the County
2	Locate and build a County utilities facility/yard

3	Develop and implement a strategic plan for water/sewer expansion in the County, to include exploration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the County create incentives to encourage local developers and contractors to construct their buildings and subdivisions on central sewer and water? • Should the County install lateral water and sewer lines at strategic locations under Route 17 to support business growth?
4	Maintain and improve our working collaboration with state and regional agencies and relevant partners to meet our transportation needs

Community Services

1	Maintain and strengthen partnerships that will result in enhanced medical services and facilities so that residents can get services that they need in Gloucester County
2	Conduct a timely full scale exercise of the local emergency operations plan

Housing and Land Use

1	Maintain the Comprehensive Plan and present for Board approval
2	Enhance mixed use, multi family, and senior living development sites by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying areas where mixed use, multi-family, and senior living development is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and report to the Board • Reviewing ordinances that would contribute/promote desired development
3	Continue to offer land use advantages to farmers and timber farmers to preserve the County’s rural atmosphere

Natural and Recreational Resources

1	Evaluate all parks and recreational facilities in the County to develop synergies with the intent to leverage the best benefit for the community and tourists.
2	Develop a plan to bring more sporting events, tournaments, and concerts to the County parks
3	Develop and implement a strategy to improve access to our waterways and other natural resources

Governance

1	Maintain and enhance a customer service strategy in Gloucester County that ensures that building permits, planning, zoning, and environmental activities are streamlined
2	Continually review County organizational structure with a goal of eliminating redundancies and inefficiencies through consolidation, elimination of redundant services, and restructuring <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore outsourcing of County services to save tax dollars• Maintain our current services levels with a reduction in spending• Review the feasibility of shared services between departments• Streamline departmental processes and support staff
3	Develop a plan and strategy for periodic review and revision of County ordinances by department to bring recommendations for change to the Board (including those that restrict residential owners)
4	Implement a budget that identifies the cost associated with program areas and ensures a methodology that has departments measure outcomes and benefit
5	Maintain a BOS suspense and tracking system that records Board actions and reports back on actions/tasked department/status/expected completion, including a process for reporting on strategic plan outcomes