

## PROPOSAL TO CREATE A HISTORIC TRIANGLE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ZONE AND DISTRIBUTION CENTER

It is proposed that the linked communities of James City County, York County and the City of Williamsburg combine in creating a suitable entity to acquire an identified parcel of real property within the geographic bounds of the communities. The entity would then develop (or cause to be developed) the property into a major intermodal cargo-handling/distribution center (the "Center"). The recommended property is generally known as "The Williamsburg Pottery Land" (the "Land"). It is estimated that the Land would accommodate between 7 and 10 million square feet of warehousing, light assembly, break-bulk and office space, providing a range of low to higher skilled jobs for thousands of employees and large, dependable revenue streams to the neighboring communities. By acquiring chartered status as an International Trade Zone, the Center could take advantage of its proximity to the Port of Hampton Roads and certain favorable economics of handling foreign goods.

The Land has topographical, geographical and infrastructure advantages such as:

- The size of the Land (about 1200 acres) would easily accommodate the scale of anticipated development and still provide a suitable buffer from any adjoining residential properties.
- In general, the Land is flat and devoid of structures having permanent value.
- The Land is bisected by a major rail line (CSX) and an interstate highway (I-64); it adjoins a major connector road (Route 199). This is a huge advantage over most sites which need to contend with large capital outlays and red tape in dealing with connection issues. The CSX rail line serves Newport News Marine Terminal, one of the fastest growing ocean ports on the East Coast.
- The Land appears to have no easement problems related to major power lines or gas pipelines.
- The Land is more favorably situated relative to major East Coast markets than other Hampton Roads properties and is not subject to the traffic congestion problems others must deal with.
- The location of the Land itself, within the Historic Triangle, would carry a "quality of life" appeal to corporate tenants and their employees.

The Land was offered for sale earlier this year by US Trust on behalf of the Maloney family. After briefly extending the bid period, the property was withdrawn from the market. No doubt the current real estate malaise had something to do with the decision. A Chicago firm purchased an 800-acre parcel of land near Suffolk for \$19.6 million earlier this year and plans to develop it into a warehousing and distribution site. That property fronts a railroad, but the adjoining roadway (Route 58) is not ready for the additional traffic anticipated at the site. Additionally, Dominion Virginia Power proposes to erect a long-distance power line across the property which could severely restrict development.