



**Request for Proposals
for
Professional consulting Services to Prepare a
Economic Growth and Diversification Plan
for
GO VA Region Five (Hampton Roads, Virginia)**

Purpose

The purpose of this Request For Proposals (“RFP”) is to solicit sealed proposals to establish a contract through competitive negotiation with a qualified source(s) to provide professional consulting services as described herein for the development of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plan for GO Virginia Regional Council Five (Hampton Roads, Virginia)

Proposal Inquiries/Point of Contact

All inquiries concerning this RFP should be submitted by email citing the RFP title to:

Ms. Donna Morris, Executive Vice President

Reinvent Hampton Roads

Email: dmorris@reinventhr.org

Potential Offerors must limit all contact, whether verbal or written, pertaining to this RFP, to the designated point of contact for the duration of the RFP process. Failure to do so may jeopardize further consideration of an Offeror’s proposal.

Glossary of Terms

The following terms and definitions apply to this RFP and any resulting contract:

- **Contractor** – The term “Contractor” refers to the person/firm awarded a contract to provide the services required in this solicitation.
- **Offeror** – The term “Offeror” refers to a person/firm who makes an offer by submitting a proposal in response to this solicitation.

Timeframe and Key Dates/Preliminary

RFP issued	May 3, 2017
RFP Deadline to Respond	May 24, 2017
Contract Award	June 6, 2017

Data collection, review, analysis	June 30, 2017
Stakeholder Engagement	July, 2017
Draft of plan to Regional Council	August 8, 2017
Economic Growth and Diversification Plan due to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)	August 25, 2017
Amendments per DHCD/GO VA Board	September 12, 2017
Adoption of Plan by Regional Council	October 3, 2017

Offeror Qualifications and Proposal Contents

Proposals must contain:

- A description of the approach and methodologies to be used.
- The total cost as well as the cost of each study component.
- The name of the project lead and members of the team along with their resume(s) and respective experience in focused plan development.
- Additional data analysis that may be required to complete the work beyond what has been previously provided to regional councils by DHCD
- Description of efforts to realize stakeholder engagement and participation in plan development

Written proposals must be submitted to Donna Morris by 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 24, 2017 via email to dmorris@reinventhr.org

Objective

In 2016, The General Assembly passed legislation and created the *Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board and Fund (VGOF)*. The GO Virginia Board has 24 members, is representative of the diversity of the Commonwealth, and includes representation from the Virginia House and Senate, gubernatorial appointments, and private sector leadership. The Commonwealth was divided into nine (9) administrative regions that have formed Regional Councils which have been certified by the Board and will be the entity that applies for funding. Representation on the council include: business, education, government, civic or community leaders, economic and workforce development professionals, local government officials, regional planning entities and nonprofit representatives. The VGOF provides state grants to regions to fund projects identified by Regional Councils and approved by the Board as vital to the efforts to diversify the regional economy, strengthen their workforce, and support collaborative programs between at least two or more localities that will lead to the creation of higher paying jobs (above the regional median wage).

In order to assist the nine Regional Councils designated by the Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board (the “Board”) to develop their growth and diversification plans (see attached guidelines),

Regional Council Five, is seeking assistance with developing the Economic Growth and Diversification plan for the region. The plan is a pre-requisite for establishing regional priorities for the receipt and use of project funds.

The economic growth and diversification plan will be a guiding document that each Regional Council will use to:

1. Identify economic opportunities, needs, and challenges facing the region.
2. Establish priorities among identified opportunities
3. Outline needed enhancements where GO Virginia funds can support collaborative programs or projects between at least two or more localities or regions.

DHCD has provided baseline measures for each region including:

1. Value of and change in average and median personal and household income, annually and cumulative since 2000 (household income per Census or BEA personal income)
2. Employment totals and employment growth by major industry sector, annually and cumulative since 2000 (use 2 digit NAICS codes for sectors, i.e. 31-33 for Manufacturing)
3. Net job growth annually and cumulative since 2000
4. Total employment numbers and unemployment rates annually and cumulative since 2000
5. Workforce commuting patterns into and out of the county and region annually since 2000
6. Total and change in the number and proportion of jobs supported through revenues derived from out-of-state sources, annually and cumulative since 2000
7. Jobs created by companies less than 5 years old annually and cumulatively since 2000
8. New company creation and destruction annually and cumulatively since 2000
9. Cost of local government services per capita annually since 2000
10. Educational Attainment since 2006
11. Average hourly wages by sector annually since 2000

The plan will guide the Regional Councils in supporting programs that include, but are not limited to, efforts to:

1. Recruit and/or retain the workforce needed in the region
2. Grow existing businesses, develop existing clusters, and to scale up small and mid-size companies
3. Establish start-ups from commercializing university or federal lab based research and supporting entrepreneurs
4. Support potential joint economic development activities such as site development and training initiatives

The implementation of the Economic Growth and Diversification Plans should focus on the creation of more higher paying jobs for the region that will bring new investment, enhance the

competitiveness of the region, and help diversify the economy of the region, in turn spurring the growth of the of the region and Virginia economy.

Background

GO VA Region Five, located in southeastern Virginia, is comprised of the Counties of Accomack, Isle of Wight, James City, Northampton, Southampton and York and the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg. A map depicting the GO Virginia Regional boundaries is included as Attachment One to this RFP. Region Five has a population of over 1.7 million and produces a gross regional product (GRP) of approximately \$86 billion annually.

Requirements

The Economic Growth and Diversification plan should be developed based on the criteria in the guidelines as well as the Evaluation Criteria for the plan as approved by the Board and available on the Department of Housing and Community Development ([DHCD](#)) website and as Attachment Two to this RFP.

In the RFP response specific reference should be made to the consultants recommended approach to accomplishing meaningful public participation and input from affected stakeholders to help identify regional needs and opportunities for cooperation. The method of receiving input and the information gained must be documented in the plan.

General Requirements include:

1. Conduct a review of existing documents, plans, and strategies in the Region
2. Data on growth of the region- including both historical trends and comparative data to other similar regions, the state, and the nation (Provided by [DHCD](#) and [HRPDC](#)).
3. Identify significant drivers of the existing economy and growth trends of these drivers (Provided by the [analysis](#) conducted by Dr. Stephen Fuller of George Mason University and the [analysis](#) conducted by Dr. Larry Filer of Old Dominion University under contract by Reinvent Hampton Roads, Dec. 2016).
4. Identify existing efforts to diversify and grow and/or retain higher paying jobs and to enhance access to such jobs.
5. Identify existing or potential business sectors or clusters which can lead to sustainable, scalable, future growth in the region and the process used to select those sectors or clusters including how growth in them can be achieved. The identification of such sectors or clusters must be based on empirical data which is based on results that are

realistic given the drivers of the region's economy. (Provided by the [analysis](#) conducted by Dr. Stephen Fuller of George Mason University and the [analysis](#) conducted by Dr. Larry Filer of Old Dominion University under contract by Reinvent Hampton Roads, Dec. 2016).

6. Identify which industry clusters offer the greatest opportunities for job growth and should receive higher priority to focus upon if resources are limited.
7. Identify workforce gaps in the availability of immediately employable talent in both the existing significant drivers of the economy as well as the suggested sectors or clusters and prioritized opportunity areas. (Provided by the [Hampton Roads State of the Workforce and Gap Analysis](#), 2017 EMSi).
 - a. If a gap(s) exists, identify current efforts to address, being specific as to the skills/credentialing/experience/education required and whether these efforts are adequate to address the shortage. Activities to import talent from outside Virginia to address gaps should also be considered.
8. Commuting patterns (both existing and potential) for the workforce to other regions/states and whether such activity affects the region's ability to attract and or retain high paying jobs. ([Analysis](#) provided by the HRTPO).
9. Identify intraregional economic differences and how the plan will address the goals of GO Virginia in a way that benefits all parts of the region. The GO Virginia Board and staff will work with regions that have similar priorities and project ideas to encourage the regions to work together or seek joint opportunities.
10. Potential performance metrics as determined and defined by the Regional Council based upon direction from the Board.

DHCD, in concert with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), has provided baseline measures as well as an initial economic analysis that should be used to inform additional analysis for the development of this plan.

Reporting Requirements

The Contractor must comply with requests for cost estimates and timelines for deliverables. In addition, the Contractor must provide specific bi-weekly progress reports to the point of contact during the course of the contract.

Deliverables

The Contractor must complete assignments and provide deliverables within required timeline and approved cost. Deliverables shall include:

1. 150 copies of the plan
2. Three briefings/meetings with Regional Council to review the plan including one at project initiation, one to review the preliminary plan and one to present the final plan.
3. Two briefings/meetings with stakeholders/general public.

Evaluation

Proposals shall be evaluated by the Regional Council using the following criteria:

- Overall suitability of the proposal and plans/methodology/approach to providing the requested services
- Demonstrated experience, qualifications, ability, and expertise of Offeror in providing the requested services
- Small, Women-Owned, and Minority-Owned Business Participation
- Total cost

General Terms and Conditions

CONTRACTUAL CLAIMS: The procedure for filing contractual claims is set forth in Section 2.2-4363 of the *Code of Virginia*.

APPLICABLE LAWS AND COURTS: This solicitation and any resulting contract shall be governed in all respects by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia and any litigation with respect thereto shall be brought in the courts of the Commonwealth. The Contractor shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules, and regulations.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION: By submitting their proposal, Offerors certify to the Commonwealth that they will conform to the provisions of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, as well as the Virginia Fair Employment Contracting Act of 1975, as amended, where applicable, the Virginians With Disabilities Act, the Americans With Disabilities Act, and Section 2.2-4311 of the *Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA)*. If the award is made to a faith-based organization, the organization shall not discriminate against any recipient of goods, services, or disbursements made pursuant to the contract on the basis of the recipient's religion, religious belief, refusal to participate in a religious practice, or on the basis of race, age, color, gender or national origin and shall be subject to the same rules as other organizations that contract with public bodies to account for the use of the funds provided; however, if the faith-based organization segregates public funds into separate accounts, only the accounts and programs funded with public funds shall be subject to audit by the public body. (*Code of Virginia*, Section 2.2-4343.1E).

During the performance of this contract, the Contractor agrees to the provisions as follows:

The Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment, except where there is a bona fide occupational qualification reasonably necessary to the normal operation of the Contractor. The Contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices setting forth the provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

The Contractor, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, will state that such Contractor is an equal opportunity employer.

Notices, advertisements and solicitations placed in accordance with federal law, rule or regulation shall be deemed sufficient for the purpose of meeting these requirements.

The Contractor will include the provisions of the above in every subcontract or purchase order over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

ETHICS IN PUBLIC CONTRACTING: By submitting their proposals, Offerors certify that their proposals are made without collusion or fraud and that they have not offered or received any kickbacks or inducements from any other Offeror, supplier, manufacturer or subcontractor in connection with their proposal, and that they have not conferred on any public employee having official responsibility for this procurement transaction any payment, loan, subscription, advance, deposit of money, services or anything of more than nominal value, present or promised, unless consideration of substantially equal or greater value was exchanged.

IMMIGRATION REFORM AND CONTROL ACT OF 1986: By entering into a written contract, the Contractor certifies that the Contractor does not, and shall not, during the performance of the contract for services in the Commonwealth, knowingly employ an unauthorized alien as defined in the federal Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986.

DEBARMENT STATUS: By submitting their proposal, Offerors certify that they are not currently debarred by the Commonwealth of Virginia from submitting proposals on contracts for the type of services covered by this solicitation, nor are they an agent of any person or entity that is currently so debarred.

ANTITRUST: By entering into a contract, the Contractor conveys, sells, assigns, and transfers to the Commonwealth of Virginia all rights, title and interest in and to all causes of action it may now have or hereafter acquire under the antitrust laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, relating to the particular services purchased or acquired by the Regional Council under said contract.

PAYMENT:

Invoices for services and accepted deliverables shall be submitted by the Contractor directly to the payment address shown on the contract. All invoices shall show the contract number,

Social Security number (for individual contractors) or the federal employer identification number (for proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations).

Any payment terms requiring payment in less than 30 days will be regarded as requiring payment 30 days after invoice or delivery, whichever occurs last. This shall not affect offers of discounts for payment in less than 30 days, however.

All services provided under this contract that are to be paid for with public funds shall be billed by the contractor at the contract price, regardless of which public agency is being billed.

The following shall be deemed to be the date of payment: the date of postmark in all cases where payment is made by mail; the date of submission where payment is made electronically; or the date of offset when offset proceedings have been instituted as authorized under the Virginia Debt Collection Act.

Unreasonable Charges. Under certain emergency procurements and for most time and material purchases, final job costs cannot be accurately determined at the time orders are placed. In such cases, Contractors are on notice that final payment in full is contingent on a determination of reasonableness with respect to all invoiced charges. Charges which appear to be unreasonable will be researched and challenged, and that portion of the invoice held in abeyance until a settlement can be reached. Upon determining that invoiced charges are not reasonable, the Regional Council shall promptly notify the Contractor, in writing, as to those charges which it considers unreasonable and the basis for the determination. A Contractor may not institute legal action unless a settlement cannot be reached within thirty (30) days of notification.

CHANGES TO THE CONTRACT: Changes can be made to the contract in any of the following ways:

The parties may agree in writing to modify the scope of the contract. An increase or decrease in the price of the contract resulting from such modification shall be agreed to by the parties as a part of their written agreement to modify the scope of the contract.

The Regional Council may order changes within the general scope of the contract at any time by written notice to the contractor. Changes within the scope of the contract include, but are not limited to, items such as services to be performed, the method of packing or shipment, and the place of delivery. The Contractor shall comply with the notice upon receipt. The Contractor shall be compensated for any additional costs incurred as the result of such order and shall give the Regional Council a credit for any savings. Said compensation shall be determined by one of the following methods:

By mutual agreement between the parties in writing; or

By agreeing upon a unit price or using a unit price set forth in the contract, if the work to be done can be expressed in units, and the Contractor accounts for the number of units of work

performed, subject to the Regional Council's right to audit the Contractor's records and/or to determine the correct number of units independently; or

By ordering the Contractor to proceed with the work and keep a record of all costs incurred and savings realized. A markup for overhead and profit may be allowed if provided by the contract. The same markup shall be used for determining a decrease in price as the result of savings realized. The Contractor shall present the Regional Council with all vouchers and records of expenses incurred and savings realized. The Regional Council shall have the right to audit the records of the Contractor as it deems necessary to determine costs or savings. Any claim for an adjustment in price under this provision must be asserted by written notice within thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the written order from the Regional Council. If the parties fail to agree on an amount of adjustment, the question of an increase or decrease in the contract price or time for performance shall be resolved in accordance with the procedures for resolving disputes provided by the Disputes Clause of this contract or, if there is none, in accordance with the disputes provided 2.2-4363 of the Code of Virginia. Neither the existence of a claim nor a dispute resolution process, litigation or any other provision of this contract shall excuse the contractor from promptly complying with the changes ordered by the Regional Council or with the performance of the contract generally.

DEFAULT: In case of failure to deliver services in accordance with the contract terms and conditions, the Regional Council, after due oral or written notice, may procure them from other sources and hold the Contractor responsible for any resulting additional purchase and administrative costs. This remedy shall be in addition to any other remedies which the Regional Council may have.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AWARD: Upon the award or the announcement of the decision to award a contract as a result of this solicitation, the Regional Council will publicly post such notice for a minimum of 10 days.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE: During the performance of this contract, the Contractor agrees to (i) provide a drug-free workplace for the Contractor's employees; (ii) post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or marijuana is prohibited in the Contractor's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violations of such prohibition; (iii) state in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor that the Contractor maintains a drug-free workplace; and (iv) include the provisions of the foregoing clauses in every subcontract or purchase order of over \$10,000, so that the provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

For the purposes of this section, "drug-free workplace" means a site for the performance of work done in connection with a specific contract awarded to a Contractor, the employees of whom are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, sale,

distribution, dispensation, possession or use of any controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of the contract.

AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE COMMONWEALTH: A Contractor organized as a stock or nonstock corporation, limited liability company, business trust, or limited partnership or registered as a registered limited liability partnership shall be authorized to transact business in the Commonwealth as a domestic or foreign business entity if so required by Title 13.1 or Title 50 of the Code of Virginia or as otherwise required by law. Any business entity described above that enters into a contract with the Regional Council pursuant to the Virginia Public Procurement Act shall not allow its existence to lapse or its certificate of authority or registration to transact business in the Commonwealth, if so required under Title 13.1 or Title 50, to be revoked or cancelled at any time during the term of the contract. The Regional Council may void any contract with a business entity if the business entity fails to remain in compliance with the provisions of this section.

SPECIAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

AUDIT: The contractor shall retain all books, records, and other documents relative to this contract for five (5) years after final payment, or until audited by the Commonwealth of Virginia, whichever is sooner. The Regional Council, its authorized agents, and/or state auditors shall have full access to and the right to examine any of said materials during said period.

CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT: The Regional Council reserves the right to cancel and terminate any resulting contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon 30 days written notice to the contractor. In the event the initial contract period is for more than 12 months, the resulting contract may be terminated by either party, without penalty, after the initial 12 months of the contract period upon 60 days written notice to the other party. Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the contractor of the obligation to deliver and/or perform on all outstanding orders issued prior to the effective date of cancellation.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION: Contractor agrees to observe complete confidentiality with respect to all aspects of any confidential information, proprietary data and/or trade secrets and any parts thereof, whether such material is the Regional Council's or other manufacturer, vendor or distributor to which contractor or contractor's personnel may gain access while engaged by the Regional Council. Revealing, copying or using in any manner whatsoever any such contents which have not been authorized by the Regional Council is strictly prohibited. The restrictions herein shall survive the termination of this agreement for any reason and shall continue in force and effect and shall be binding upon the contractor, its agents, employees, successors, assigns, subcontractors or any party claiming an interest in this agreement on behalf of or under the rights of the contractor following any termination. Contractor shall advise all Contractors' agents, employees, successors, assigns, or subcontractors that are engaged by the Regional Council of the restrictions, present and continuing, set forth herein. Contractor shall defend and incur all costs, if any, for actions

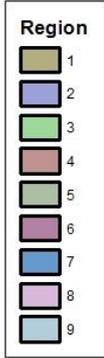
which arise as a result of non-compliance by Contractor, its agents, employees, successors, assigns, or subcontractors regarding the restrictions herein.

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR: The Contractor shall be considered an independent contractor and neither the Contractor, nor personnel employed by the contractor, are in any sense to be considered employees or agents of the Regional Council, or of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

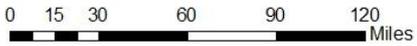
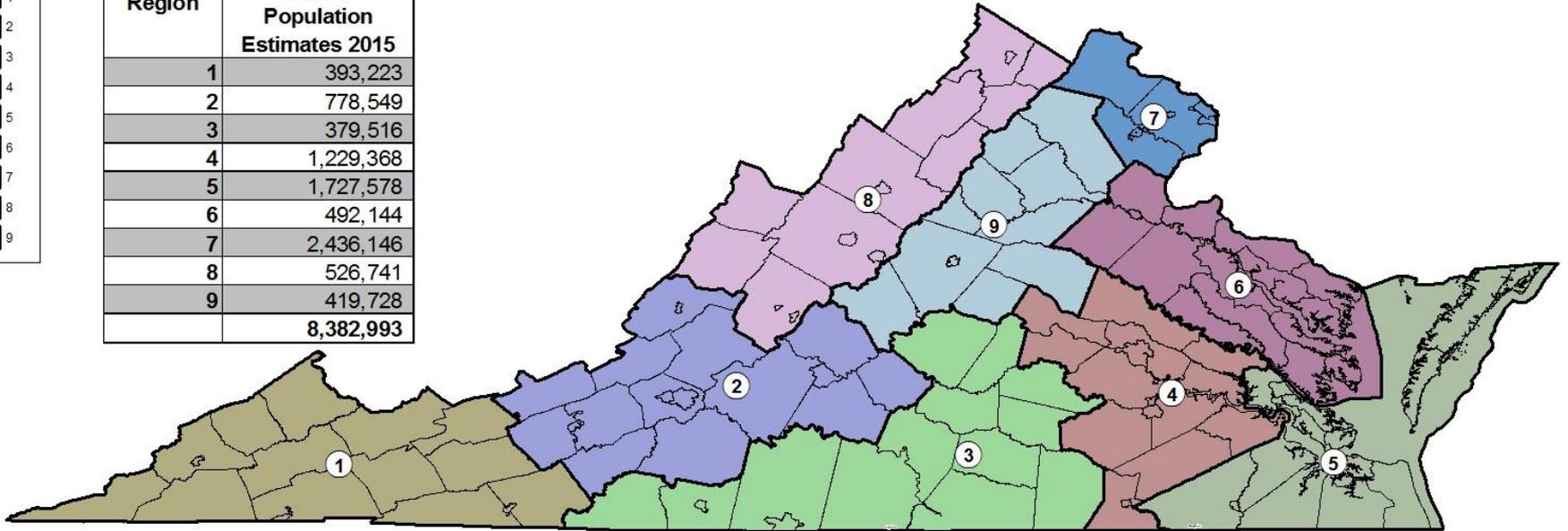
OWNERSHIP OF MATERIAL: All materials generated under this contract shall be considered work made for hire. The Regional Council shall have all rights, title and interest in or to all products, work plans, project reports, designs, programs, databases and documentation developed or generated under this contract including without limitation unlimited rights to use, duplicate, modify or disclose any part thereof, in any manner and for any purpose and the right to permit or prohibit any other person including the contractor from doing so. To the extent the Contractor may be deemed at any time to have any of the foregoing rights the Contractor agrees to assign and does hereby assign such rights to the Regional Council.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: The Regional Council reserves the right to determine if a conflict of interest exists between the Contractor or their affiliates and the work of the Regional Council. The Contractor shall continue to disclose during the term of the contract to the Regional Council any situations in which potential conflict of interest could arise, present the facts of the situation and offer an opinion as to whether the situation involves a conflict. The Contractor shall agree to accept the decision of the Regional Council as to whether or not a conflict exists.

GO Virginia Regional Boundaries



Region	Weldon Cooper Center Population Estimates 2015
1	393,223
2	778,549
3	379,516
4	1,229,368
5	1,727,578
6	492,144
7	2,436,146
8	526,741
9	419,728
	8,382,993



Source: US Census, VA PDC



12/5/2016

Economic Growth and Diversification Plan

The economic growth and diversification plan, to be developed with the initial Virginia Growth and Opportunity Funds (VGOF), is to be a document that each Regional Council will use to identify economic opportunities, needs, and challenges, establish priorities among those opportunities, and outline needed enhancements where GO Virginia grant funds can (a) support collaborative programs between at least two or more localities that will (b) lead to the creation of more higher paying jobs. Such jobs should be primarily based on sectors and clusters that ultimately generate new revenues from out-of-state sources. The plan will guide the Regional Councils in supporting programs that include, but are not limited to, efforts to (1) create, recruit and/or retain the talent needed in the region; (2) grow existing businesses, develop existing clusters, scale up small and mid-size companies; (3) establish start-ups from commercializing research and supporting entrepreneurs, and; (4) potential joint economic development activities. The implementation of these plans should focus on higher paying jobs (above the median wage) for the region that will bring new investment, enhance the competitiveness of the region, and diversify the economy of the region, in turn supporting the growth of the Commonwealth's economy. The plan should encourage innovation and be flexible to incorporate new ideas and opportunities that are identified by the Regional Council over time. Finally, the plans, and ultimately, the projects, should focus on activities that are sustainable and have the ability for long-term growth.

Section I – Intent

GO Virginia is intended to facilitate regional collaboration to grow and diversify the economy through supporting projects leading to the creation of more higher paying jobs (primarily based on revenue derived from out-of-state sources) and addressing gaps in workforce and other factors that impact the success of growth and diversification programs at the regional level. Programs and projects recommended by the Regional Councils and approved by the Board shall be consistent with the regional economic growth and diversification plan. The plan should not specifically outline or limit the potential projects that could be later funded by the GO Virginia Board but instead serve as the guide for evaluating which potential projects best address the needs and opportunities identified in the plan.

Section II - Growth and Diversification Plan

Each Regional Council shall develop and provide, to the Board for approval, a regional economic growth and diversification plan in accordance with these guidelines. Plans should be based on a realistic and empirically derived understanding of the regional economy and its potential. The plan should establish priorities for future use of GO Virginia project grants and take into consideration other studies and analyses related to development and validation of an economic diversification strategy as it relates to the creation of higher paying jobs. In developing the plan, Regional Councils are advised that the projects and programs which could ultimately be funded by the GO Virginia Board need only include two or more localities.

It is not the intent of GO Virginia to duplicate recently completed or ongoing strategic planning efforts, or to serve solely as an implementation model for earlier plans. This is not a regional strategic economic

development plan, nor is the plan envisioned to be comprehensive in addressing all challenges that face a particular region, but instead, the plan should focus on priority areas that accomplish GO Virginia's goals. Participation in the process of conducting a critical analysis of regional issues and prioritizing potential actions is essential, so the plan is intended to seek input from impacted stakeholders, focus attention on critical issues of regional economic growth and diversification, and identify and prioritize opportunities that could be pursued. The analysis should challenge existing assumptions about the region's economy and inform the Council on how the region may develop growth opportunities. Efforts should also include identifying whether the appropriate conditions exist for a region to effectively realize the priorities and strategies outlined in the plan.

The Board, and its administrative support, will provide technical assistance and review, upon request, during plan development.

The plan will identify key needs and opportunities and suggest leadership within the Region to:

1. Promote private sector growth and objectively derived priority areas of opportunity in the region leading to higher paying jobs by strengthening and diversifying the region's economy based primarily upon revenues derived from out-of-state sources.
2. Conduct a focused gap analysis to identify economic sector gaps and possible growth areas and assess workforce availability/gaps related to the opportunities and needs identified and in the plan and review the existing drivers of higher paying jobs in the economy. The analysis should focus on priority areas identified as part of the diversification plan and not needs across the entire regional economy. Regions should reference the Virginia Workforce Board/Regional Workforce Investment Board gap analysis and consider other relevant state level strategic plans that contain data and elements related to the priorities of the region.
3. Illustrate potential actions the collaborating business, education, government, and other stakeholders in the region could pursue to expand economic opportunity, grow and diversify the economy, and align worker training programs with the education and skills needed by employers and potential employers in the region that leads to the creation of higher paying jobs.

As previously outlined, the plan is not intended to outline the exact projects that could be funded by GO Virginia project funds; but instead, should serve as the framework to guide future decisions by the Regional Council and the Board in determining which potential projects might address the plan's priorities and other statewide goals established by the Board.

Section II (A) - Requirements

At a minimum, and to assist with establishing baseline data for further evaluation, the plan should include the following elements:

1. Data on growth of the region- including both historical trends and comparative data to other similar regions, the state, and the nation, including:

- a. Annual change in average personal income since 2000 (household income per Census, or BEA personal income)
 - b. Growth of key employment sectors since 2000
 - c. Job growth year by year and cumulative since 2000
 - d. How changes in employment and wage patterns have impacted regional economic growth since 2000 (i.e. the multiplier effect of jobs/wages lost or gained)
 - e. Identify commuting patterns into and out of the region and the impact of such a patterns on the ability to attract and or retain high paying jobs
 - f. Change in the number of jobs supported through revenues derived from out-of-state sources
2. Identify significant drivers of the existing economy and growth trends of these drivers
 3. Identify existing efforts to diversify and grow and/or retain higher paying jobs and to enhance access to such jobs.
 4. Identify existing or potential business sectors or clusters which can lead to sustainable, scalable, future growth in the region and the process used to select those sectors or clusters including how growth in them can be achieved. The identification of such sectors or clusters must be based on empirical data and which is based on results that are realistic given the drivers of the region's economy.

For purposes of the plan, a cluster is a group of companies in a business sector with an affiliated supply chain, the relationships between and among industries in a region that support economic growth, workforce training resources, and other related assets.

5. Identify workforce gaps in the availability of immediately employable talent in both the existing significant drivers of the economy as well as the suggested sectors or clusters and prioritized opportunity areas.
 - a. If a gap exists, identify current efforts to address, being specific as to the skills/credentialing/experience/education required and whether these efforts are adequate to address the shortage. Activities to import talent from outside Virginia to address gaps should also be considered.
 6. Commuting patterns (both existing and potential) for the workforce to other regions/states and whether such activity affects the region's ability to attract and or retain high paying jobs.
 7. Identify intraregional economic differences and how the plan will address the goals of GO Virginia in a way that benefits all parts of the region. The GO Virginia Board and staff will work with regions that have similar priorities and project ideas to encourage the regions to work together or seek joint opportunities.
 8. Potential performance metrics as determined and defied by the Region based upon direction from the Board.
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Section II (B) – Guiding Principles

Following a review and summary of this baseline data, the plan should be guided by the following principles:

1. The Regional Council shall acquire the baseline understanding necessary to produce a factually informed understanding of the region's current economic structure and how that existing structure predicated the range of potential and likely opportunities available. This would include a review of current and relevant existing local and regional strategic plans to provide baseline information (including but not limited to Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies, Workforce Investment Board regional plans, state level industry, workforce, and economic development strategic plans, trade association plans).
2. Members of the Regional Council shall play an active role in reviewing and analyzing regional information; shall participate in completing a critical analysis of the region (including its economic structure, existing development programs as well as future needs and opportunities); shall participate in identifying and prioritizing the needs and opportunities; and shall identify potential actions to address those needs and opportunities.
3. The regional planning process is intended to help identify needs and opportunities and also outline a prioritized plan of action that shows measurable results over a two-year period. An outline about how these efforts can be sustained over a 5-10 year horizon should also be provided. The plan must be revisited, on no less than a biennial basis, to determine if adjustments are required to better meet regional needs or take advantage of new opportunities. The plan may be amended by the Regional Council at any time to address emerging opportunities or special needs. Such amendments shall be subject to review by the Board.
4. The plan will outline priorities for the region and identify how the region could undertake activities to grow existing business, fill gaps in existing sector presence, scale up existing companies (particularly around existing or emerging supply chains and clusters), support entrepreneurs, identify opportunities for the commercialization of research, and examine potential joint economic development activities. The plan should also assess the number of small and minority owned businesses, and promote their development in the region, if such activities lead to the creation of higher paying jobs.
5. The plan should address the elements outlined in the Growth and Opportunity Act and how strategies are aligned with other related programs including, as appropriate, the Virginia Research Investment Committee (VRIC), the Collaborative Jobs Act, and the State Council for Higher Education Virginia (SCHEV) credentialing program. In addition, the plan should address how it aligns with other statewide and regional plans that may relate to the identified strategies and projects.
6. The Regional Council shall provide for public participation and input from affected stakeholders to help identify regional needs and opportunities for cooperation. The method of receiving input and the information gained must be documented in the plan.

7. The role of the Regional Council and other relevant agencies and entities involved in the development of the plan and potential implementation of the plan should be considered. Potential sources of matching funds should be identified, though specific commitments and amounts are not required until applications are sought to support regional projects. Note that any requested funds from the Board must be matched with non-state funds, however, additional match (above the amount of match requested from the Board) from state sources is encouraged.

Section III - Reporting Requirements

Each Regional Council will submit an initial report to the Board by July 1, 2017 that will include. A status update on the economic growth and diversification plan and how the region will approach developing the plan

Section IV -Evaluation Criteria

Prior to submitting the proposed regional economic growth and diversification plan to the GO Virginia Board for review and approval, DHCD will afford an opportunity for appropriate State Agencies to review and comment on the plan. The purpose of this review shall be to ensure sufficient empirical review and basis was used to justify the recommendations in each plan and alignment with overall state goals.

When making decisions about funding for each Regional Council to undertake its plan, and the approval of such plan, the Board will evaluate the following:

1. The amount, if any, of any matching or other leveraged funds to support the plan development.
2. Alignment of the proposed plan with the general statewide goals of GO Virginia and the performance metrics adopted by the Board.
3. Opportunities for alignment with skills gap analyses and other workforce plans.
4. The Board will take into consideration and encourage projects that have interstate, inter-regional, and other beneficial forms of collaboration as a result of the proposed activity.

Section V – Useful Resources

The following resources may be useful in providing additional direction or data to regional councils in developing their plans:

- Virginia Growth and Opportunity Act - <https://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?161+ful+CHAP0779+pdf>
- Council for Virginia’s Future “Virginia Performs” industry cluster quadrant analysis - <http://vaperforms.virginia.gov/indicators/economy/economicDiversity.php>

- Virginia Economic Development Strategic Plan - <https://commerce.virginia.gov/media/3501/new-virginia-economy-12052014.pdf>
- Virginia Chamber of Commerce Blueprint Virginia plan - <https://www.vachamber.com/blueprint-virginia/>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics- <https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewlq.htm>