

# Economic Feasibility Analysis

Appomattox Economic Development Authority

Kendrick Brunson

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this feasibility analysis is to examine the best approach to improve economic development for Appomattox County. The client for this analysis was the Economic Development Authority (EDA) of Appomattox County, Virginia. The published goals of the EDA are (a) expansion of the tax base, (b) economic stability, (c) job retention, and (d) job creation. The key question to be asked is, "Why would any organization choose Appomattox County over other locations to establish an outlet of the organization?"

In the field of marketing, a critical concept is to identify what differentiates a marketer's brand image, products, and services from its competitors' images in the minds of consumers within the market. The goal of the effort is to position the marketer's organization and its products/services within the natural points of differentiation (POD) that exist in the market's perceptions. In the case of Appomattox County, what is the one POD that brings notoriety to it so that the County can leverage that notoriety when attempting to attract organizations to build in the county? The answer is the event that took place in Appomattox on April 9, 1865. The problem is that the county has not taken full advantage in the past of the opportunity for notoriety; the good news is that there is a window of opportunity to do so prior to mid-2015, when the Sesquicentennial anniversaries of the Civil War events will come to an end, at least for Appomattox.

Why this researcher believes that the opportunity for notoriety has not been leveraged in the past is the lack of entertainment synergy around the one attraction that provides the potential for national attention, the surrender site on National Park Service (NPS)

property. A foundational measurement of the potential for growing tourism in the Appomattox Community, hereinafter referred to as simply the Community and representative of both the Town of Appomattox and the County of Appomattox, is attendance at the surrender site. There has been an increase in attendance at the NPS surrender site since 2011 due, in part, to the Sesquicentennial effect and to the addition of the Museum of the Confederacy (MOC) in March 2012.

Another foundational measurement could be the number of hotel rooms occupied. However, the hotel occupancy rate is difficult to account for at the time of this study because there are only 65 rooms available for rent, and those rooms are not part of a hotel-branded property typically preferred by most travelers who would visit historical sites (Civil War Travelers, Tour Bus Travelers, and Family Vacation Travelers). It is the educated opinion of this researcher that the number of visitors to the Community has been suppressed because of the under-availability of lodging facilities to meet even a normal demand for a community the size of Appomattox and located on major highways within the center of Virginia. If even one hotel and conference center were to be built along the commercial district of Appomattox, tourism-based revenues should increase even if just transferred from nearby lodging facilities.

The purpose for having sufficient hotel accommodations in support of Appomattox tourist sites is to encourage visitors to stay longer and spend more money in the area. Currently, it appears that most visitors who wish to spend more than one day at the historical site and MOC stay in Lynchburg or Farmville. It has been reported that

the Hampton Inn of Farmville is the one of the largest revenue producers in the hotel chain nationally (Personal Interview with Anne Dixon, 2012). The position proffered in this feasibility study is that, if the County were to complete six proposed projects within the next 24-30 months, the notoriety of Appomattox as a destination would spread and send a strong promotional message that could serve to attract business organizations to build in the County.

The proposed six-part project plan would be, in no particular order, to (1) enhance the “cosmetics” of the area with standard signage based on a historical motif, (2) enhance the existing Clover Hill Historical Village to include more buildings and the presence of re-enactors daily during the primary tourist season, (3) develop the Civil War battlefield site into a replica of the April 9, 1865 battle, (4) build a robust Welcome Center in an accessible area off the main highways with an indoor theater featuring an original documentary film of “Lee’s Final March” (the last nine days of the Army of Northern Virginia), (5) build a hotel and conference center facility under a national brand like Marriott, and (6) partner with a public transit system to reduce potential future traffic congestion while maintaining the historical era motif. The combination of these facilities or improvements to existing facilities would provide a synergy for visitors to “hang out” in Appomattox for a desired 2-3 day stay. The results would be much needed economic growth in the Community.

So why consider tourism as the leading element in economic development efforts? Beyond it being the one market attribute that sets Appomattox County apart in the mind of the public, it is a clean industry based on customer service and one of the few industries that

is maintaining growth even during disastrous economic conditions nationally (see the *Tourism Industry* section of this report for empirical data to support this statement). A national survey was conducted during this feasibility study that indicated 45% of the adult population in the United States were aware of the Appomattox name and the vast majority of them accurately associated it with the Civil War. Pursuing any other business or industry at this time, for the purposes of enticing them to build in the County, would be risky and ill advised. The Thomasville Furniture Company is a good example of this point. From a direct quote made by the Vice President, there was a great appreciation of the citizens of the County as a desirable workforce, indicating a positive draw to the county if businesses wanted to locate in Appomattox County. However, the Thomasville plant was closed because of the current downsizing of the furniture industry in the United States as a result of the current economic recession. Many other American industrial plants have suffered the same closures.

An excellent tourist model to use in planning the direction for tourism in Appomattox County is that of Colonial Williamsburg. It is the top tourist attraction in the Commonwealth of Virginia with approximately 750,000 paying visitors in 2011. There is no reason why someday Appomattox could not achieve similar success earned by Williamsburg after 75 years of development. (In fact, some research conducted for this feasibility study indicated that there is a greater interest in the Civil War era of U.S. history than in the colonial period that is represented by Williamsburg.) Because of the impressive tourist draw to Colonial Williamsburg, other entertainment venues have been established in the area. Historical Jamestown and Historical Yorktown

have been developed in a similar manner as Colonial Williamsburg to form the Historic Triangle.

Busch Gardens' Theme Park, Water Country USA (5<sup>th</sup> largest water park and 3<sup>rd</sup> outside of Orlando with 697,000 guests in 2011), golf resorts, major shopping outlets, etc., have been built to take advantage of the number of tourists who travel to the area. To support these entertainment venues, hundreds of lodging establishments and many more dining facilities exist. All of this growth at Williamsburg began with one man's vision (Reverend Dr. W. A. R. Goodwin), one man who caught the vision (John D. Rockefeller Jr.) and the initiative of many local citizens to develop the vision. Could this not happen in Appomattox to some extent?

The one area that this researcher believes may be infeasible for developing tourism in Appomattox County is based upon the recent history of confrontation between various factions of citizens within the town and the county. There appears to be a resistance to growing the tourism business within the County and, to a larger extent, within the Town portion of the County. The proposals within this feasibility study provide recommendations for how to resolve all other issues that could block the growth of tourism within the Community except for the potential resistance to hospitality by the local citizens towards visitors to the area.

Recent research studies in the hospitality and tourism industry have revealed that the receptivity of local citizens to embracing visitors to a rural community like Appomattox has a profound effect on the success or failure of any efforts to attract tourism to the region

(Deng, Arbogast, & Selin, 2011; Capriello & Rotherham, 2011; Choo, Park, & Petrick, 2011). The official terms used are *Community Tourism* (CT) or *Community-Based Tourism* (CBT). Research indicates that local Tourism organizations can hire the best customer service employees and train them well. However, if visitors/guests encounter members of the general public with negative attitudes towards them, the negative random encounters will nullify any positive efforts by the well-trained, excellent customer service employees, likely resulting in the eventual demise of the tourism initiative.

One of the concerns heard often during the research phase of the project for this report was the desire of Community citizens to maintain the ambience of the historical era. That concern is valid. Deng et al. (2011) described the dual goals for rural communities interested in tourism as being “improving the quality of life without losing their rural atmosphere” (p. 601). If the historical motif is lost in the Community, the tourism value declines. Protecting the historical increases the likelihood that the tourism business will flourish. Therefore, these two goals are reflected in this feasibility study.

Another often heard concern from the citizens of the Community was, “Who is going to pay for this?” In this report is the recommendation for the County to form partnerships with businesses and non-profit organizations to provide the capital needed to invest in the proposed facilities, similar to Mr. Rockefeller’s investments in Colonial Williamsburg. Increased revenues will come from increased property, hospitality and retail sales taxes. As the number of visitors to Appomattox increases over time, revenues should increase proportionately as a result of more hotels, restaurants and

entertainment facilities being built to accommodate the increased hospitality demand. There should be no additional tax burden on local citizens if the growth is managed properly. Economic stability could be achieved because of the resilient nature of the hospitality and tourism industry by comparison with other industries that are not as stable.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On March 31, 2012, Mr. Jeff Taylor, Director of Economic Development for Appomattox County, Virginia, approached this researcher at the Grand Opening of the Museum of the Confederacy (MOC). Mr. Taylor indicated that he wanted to conduct an economic feasibility study for Appomattox County. He was responding to a recommendation from Ms. Vickie Yates, Marketing Director for the MOC, based on the quality of the customer research project being conducted by the researcher's class of students from Liberty University. Mr. Taylor followed up with his request in early June and asked the researcher to review materials from the Economic Development Authority (EDA) in order to provide a preliminary assessment.

With no presentation of biased materials before conducting the preliminary evaluation, the researcher examined the case of Thomasville Furniture Company, conducted an interview with Mr. Bill Slagle on the existing infrastructure of the county in terms of public utilities, and searched the Internet for information about Appomattox County. The original assessment given to Mr. Taylor and Mr. Slagle was that the core strategy in the near term should be to pursue improving tourism during the Civil War Sesquicentennial season and

build from a foundation of name recognition for other industries that might desire to come to the area. On June 25, 2012, the researcher made an oral presentation to the Appomattox EDA with several local elected officials in attendance. Based on the recommendation of the Director and the Chairman, the EDA hired the researcher to conduct the feasibility study and present the findings in a formal report to the EDA at its September 24, 2012 meeting.

The researcher is an Associate Professor of Business – Marketing with the Liberty University School of Business in Lynchburg, Virginia, where he has been on faculty since July 2006. Prior to accepting the faculty position, he was employed by GTE, which became Verizon in 2000, for a combined 27 years in management positions at various levels of the organization. The final 16.5 years of his career with the company were in sales and marketing positions, his last as the Marketing Manager of seven southeastern states, based in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. In addition to several small businesses that he has owned in the past and a few that he still owns today, he consults for various small and medium enterprise owners. He holds a Doctorate of Business Administration degree with a specialization in Marketing from Northcentral University, and a Master of Business Administration from the Babcock Graduate School of Management, Wake Forest University. His undergraduate degree is in the Arts from Carson-Newman College.

The remainder of this report consists of three primary sections: a situational analysis to include key market segments that could be targeted, a proposed plan for implementation, and a pro forma

revenue impact report. The report will conclude with recommendations for next steps to be taken.

## SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

### SWOT Analysis

The SWOT Analysis is a standard evaluation tool that is used in business to identify the positive factors that can assist an organization in being successful in its mission and the negative factors that can potentially hinder an organization from achieving its mission. The internal positive factors are called Strengths and the external positive factors are called Opportunities. The internal negative factors are called Weaknesses and the external negative factors are called Threats. The following is the researcher's analysis of Appomattox County, based on what was discovered during the feasibility study.

#### Strengths

1. Historical site known by 45% of the national market (see survey results)
2. Of all Civil War battlefield sites, it is unique in theme as the beginning of the end of the Civil War – reconciliation
3. In Virginia, it is in a central location geographically
4. Over 200,000 visitors come to the area annually already
5. The Commonwealth of Virginia is one of the most popular U.S. destinations for tourism which provides a base of visitors traveling through the area

6. Visiting historical sites is a strong attraction for destinations selected by vacationers (see survey results)

## Weaknesses

1. Lack of unity among representatives of local governing bodies with a reputation that exceeds the boundaries of the County
2. Lack of sufficient lodging and dining facilities to accommodate overnight guests
3. Unorganized landscapes – eyesores that can serve to repel vs. attract visitors, leave a bad memory of the area vs. a good memory
4. No synergy among existing tourist venues; each operates independently of the others

## Opportunities

1. The Sesquicentennial years of 2011-2015 will bring additional focus on the Civil War era of America
2. Because the primary focus on Appomattox comes in April 2015, there is sufficient time to prepare for the arrival of many guests if the citizens can unite quickly
3. The Commonwealth of Virginia is investing in tourism projects like the grant given to the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg recently to build a hotel complex and another grant to promote historical events
4. Dependent upon the outcome of the November 2012 national elections, if the economy were to begin a recovery stage, there is a potential of pent-up demand

that should result in the tourism industry growing;  
individuals enjoy vacations with family and friends

## Threats

1. Dependent upon the outcome of the November 2012 national elections, if the economy continues down the current path of decline, any proposals in this study should be reevaluated in order to allow sufficient time to assess the risk that investments by the Community into tourism might entail
2. A worsening economy will be devastating to all industries, even the tourism industry in the educated opinion of the researcher
3. If the existing landscape and facilities of the County remain the same between now and 2015, the increasing number of visitors during the Sesquicentennial period will report to their social networks of a less-than-awe-inspiring visit – “there is nothing to see here and the nearest hotel room is 30 minutes away”
4. If Appomattox does not take advantage of any available funding for tourism from the state government, the funds will be diverted to other parts of Virginia until the funds are depleted or removed by the state because of no interest in using them.

## Economic Analysis

It should come as no revelation to anyone that the current United States, and even global, economic conditions are poor. Some have stated that the last time the U.S. economy was this bad dates

back to the 1930s. Unemployment is high, the national debt is unsustainable on its current trajectory, and the forecast is even worse if current federal government taxation and redistribution plans remain in effect. Despite these dire economic times, the tourism industry has maintained its vibrancy as is documented in the Industry Analysis section of this report. The question remains as to what impact the U.S. economy specifically, and the world economy generally, will have on the hospitality and tourism industry.

It is the educated opinion of this researcher that a change in the current economic policies of the federal government holds the opportunity to begin reversal of the deep recession currently in existence. Some economists suggest that it could take as many as 15 years to return to a pre-2009 economy. There is evidence to suggest that many companies have large cash reserves and are waiting on hiring decisions dependent upon removing uncertainties about employee healthcare costs and federal regulations like those imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which have been increasing dramatically in recent years. In addition, the economy is driven in large part by perception. If the population is confident of the future, they will consume in a different manner than if the future is uncertain. Economic activity is a key measurement of the overall economic condition. On a recent visit to Williamsburg by the researcher, it appeared that economic activity was robust in the Outlet Malls where bargains are reported to be available.

On the other hand, if the current administration is granted a second term, indications are that, not only would the present trend continue, but pending economic pitfalls (Affordable Healthcare Act,

Bush tax cuts ending, etc.) could be disastrous and the fallout would be felt in previously successful industries like hospitality and tourism. There is speculation that the current President of the United States, when no longer facing the voters, might accelerate his current economic policies that have produced, in large part, the current economic situation. If the current Administration is reinstated, it would be ill advised for the County to invest in any expansion plans until the full impact of the future economy is known.

### Industry Analysis

In 2011, the United States leisure market was valued at \$2.5 trillion. By comparison, retail sales in the United States were valued at \$4.4 trillion and healthcare at \$2.6 trillion. Travel and tourism represent the top expenditures (\$533 billion) or 21% of the leisure market. There were 1.5 billion trips taken in 2011 with over 40% of adults in the United States traveling on at least one summer vacation. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of this travel was in the United States and the other 12% vacation travel occurred in international markets (Miller, 2012).

The proportion of money spent while on leisure travel follows:

Food: \$133 billion (25%)  
Public transportation: \$101 billion (19%)  
Automobile transportation: \$101 billion (19%)  
Lodging: \$96 billion (18%)  
Entertainment/Recreation: \$64 billion (12%)  
General Retail: \$43 billion (8%)

Over half of travel was based on hobbies and interests with 39% of the trips involving cultural, arts, historic or heritage activities and events. Twenty-six percent (26%) of Americans feel that leisure or vacation trips should include a museum, historic site or landmark. The attendance numbers for the Appomattox surrender site in 2011 were 216,220 which represents #20 on the list of national historical parks in the United States. There were 150 Civil War re-enactments conducted in 2011 as a part of the Sesquicentennial observances. In 2010, there were 117 re-enactments, an increase of 28% during the Sesquicentennial year. The spending by tourists at all Sesquicentennial events from 2011 through 2015 is estimated to be \$2.7 billion. Gettysburg, which normally welcomes approximately 30,000 re-enactors and 50,000 visitors each July, was expecting a 33% increase in 2011 or a record of four million visitors for the year (Miller, 2012). The record number should increase significantly in 2013, the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of the Gettysburg battle.

According to U. S. Census Bureau data (2007), the following comparisons are made between Appomattox County and the City of Williamsburg, the top tourist attraction in Virginia.

Table 1

*Comparison of Appomattox County with Williamsburg City with Selected Data*

| Category          | Appomattox County | City of Williamsburg | Difference |
|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|
| Retail Sales      | \$107.2 million   | \$323.0 million      | 301.4%     |
| Population (2010) | 14,973            | 14,068               | 94%        |
| Sales per capita  | \$7,551           | \$26,058             | 345.1%     |
| Rooms & Food      | \$7.3 million     | \$239.6 million      | 3,296.5%   |

*Source: United States Census Bureau, 2007.*

The number of paying visitors to Colonial Williamsburg in 2011 was 750,000 and the number for Appomattox was 216,220 (a 347% differential). One could question which era of American history has the potential of a greater attraction to tourists, the colonial or the Civil War era. For the purposes of this report, the assumption is that the two historical eras are of equal interest to tourists who visit historical sites. Some factors of success for Colonial Williamsburg are (a) proximity to the state capital (60 miles) and the coastal beach areas (30 miles), (b) the proximity to two other historical sites (Jamestown and Yorktown – the other two components of the “Historical Triangle”), (c) the length of time the tourist site has been in operation (75 years), (d) the quality of the facilities where tourists can “step back into time”, (e) the close proximity of the historical buildings to each other in a contiguous property for convenience of the visitors, and (f) the quality of the 3,500 well-trained staff members whose job is to re-create the 18<sup>th</sup> Century for guests.

With the exception of the first two factors of success listed above, nothing prevents Appomattox from replicating what

Williamsburg has to offer. The tourist locations in proximity to Appomattox would be Patrick Henry's Red Hill Plantation (26 miles), Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest in Lynchburg (28 miles from Appomattox), the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford and the Blue Ridge Parkway (42 miles), Jefferson's Monticello in Charlottesville (64 miles), etc. In addition, the Civil War Historical sites associated with Lee's Retreat are within 100 miles of Appomattox.

## Market Analysis

The Market Analysis section is devoted to providing profiles of the target market segments of tourism guests that Appomattox County should pursue. These target market segments include (1) Civil War Travelers, (2) Tour Bus Visitors, (3) Family Vacationers, and (4) Other Overnight Guests (e.g., Conference/Convention Attendees, Family Reunions, etc.). These groups represent the tourists who already would be interested in historical sites and recreational facilities that should come to Appomattox in the future. The information on these profiles was derived from survey respondents of two national surveys that were conducted specifically for this feasibility study and from interviews with key individuals who work with the targeted groups of travelers or their travel agencies.

The initial national survey was designed to determine the extent to which the name Appomattox was known to adults in the United States. The survey offered a qualifier question, "Have you heard or read the name of Appomattox?" The response was either "Yes" or "No". For those who answered "No", they were thanked for taking the survey and the survey ended for them. For those who responded with a "Yes", a follow up question was asked, "What comes to mind when

you think of Appomattox?" The respondents were allowed to write a narrative response. The results were that 45% of the respondents knew the name and 55% did not know the name. Of the respondents who knew the name, almost all had a correct image of Appomattox being connected with the Civil War's end. A random sample of 400 respondents would produce a statistical result of 95% confidence level with a (+/-) 5% margin of error. There were 1,224 respondents to our national survey resulting in a 99% confidence level with a (+/-) 3.68% margin of error.

Demographically, the respondents who were more apt to know the name of Appomattox were about the same in gender balance, higher educated, living on the eastern seaboard, and older than 45 years old when compared with the respondents who did not know the name. More details of the demographics for the national name recognition survey are listed in Appendix 1 of this report.

### Civil War Traveler

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Civil War Traveler (CWT) to Virginia stays between 2 and 10 nights within the Commonwealth, with an average overnight stay of 6.4 nights. These are not restricted to one location, but the typical stay at each location is 1-2 nights. Virginia is a popular destination for Civil War travelers because 60% of the Civil War battles were fought here. It can be assumed that a significant percentage of the current visitors to the National Park Service surrender site represent this tourist target market segment. As previously stated, there is an indication that attendance at Civil War sites during the Sesquicentennial years are increasing attendance numbers by approximately one-third over non-

Sesquicentennial years. This group of tourists should represent a core constituency of visitors to Appomattox because of the unique role that the surrender site plays in the Civil War historical drama.

Currently, the National Park Service (NPS) provides two slide shows and guides at the porch for re-enactments. On the anniversary of the surrender and a few other times during the year, full re-enactments occur, and are heavily attended by individuals and tour bus visitors. A major contributor to the success of Colonial Williamsburg is the daily re-enactments that occur on the property. Adding re-enactments on a more regular basis to the NPS site and/or the improved Clover Hill Village site could have a significant effect of increasing visits by these travelers. When re-enactments are not being staged, "townspeople" can share stories about the times, the people of the times, and the interesting tools of the times. Travelers who enjoy historical destinations enjoy the stories that come from those historical times. An example of a script written for an iPod tour is listed in Appendix 2.

### Tour Bus Visitor

In an interview with Ms. Anne Dixon, Appomattox Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, she indicated that there were approximately 50 bus tours that visited Appomattox in 2011. Her estimate for 2012 was double that number due, in part, to the addition of the Museum of the Confederacy and the Sesquicentennial season. Recently Ms. Dixon shared a request from a tour company (Global Enduro) that indicated a group of 326 motorcyclists from England would be visiting Appomattox in September on a Civil War tour ride. This same group had the privilege of riding through Africa with Prince

William and Prince Harry of England. Though tour bus companies bring tourists to Appomattox, they lodge in other locations, and often return the next day to finish their tour of the sites before moving on to the next destination. If there were more lodging rooms in Appomattox, more tour bus visitors might be attracted to the area.

When asked her opinion of what would change if Appomattox offered lodging and the historical/entertainment venues of the proposed plan, listed in a later section of this report, she stated that Appomattox could equal Williamsburg tour bus visitors in time. In addition to improving current facilities, adding food and lodging facilities, recreational and historical facilities, tour bus companies would stop in Appomattox more if services could be provided for the buses like cleaning them, providing fuel, and pumping the onboard septic systems. In addition to staying longer for Appomattox attractions, tour bus visitors could use Appomattox as a centralized base for touring other regional venues (e.g., Blue Ridge Parkway, National D-Day Memorial, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Patrick Henry's Red Hill Plantation, etc.).

### Family Vacationer

Some data were provided earlier in this report from the 2012-2013 Leisure Market Research Handbook. In addition, a national survey was conducted specifically for this feasibility study to determine the vacationing profiles of families and what they preferred to do while on vacation. A random sample of 400 respondents would produce a statistical result of 95% confidence level with a (+/-) 5% margin of error. There were 664 respondents to the national survey resulting in a 99% confidence level with a (+/-) 5% margin of error. Questions were

asked of the respondents: (a) how many family vacation trips they took each year, (b) how many members of different age groups were in their family, (c) the types of lodging and how many nights' stay on average per trip, (d) the amount they paid for the lodging, (e) their food preferences, and favorite activities enjoyed on these trips. The findings are listed in Appendix 3 of this report.

In addition, a question was asked of the likelihood that respondents would consider a trip to Appomattox, Virginia if all of their favorite accommodations and activities were provided and they could visit the historical attractions of the proposed plan in this report. The mean score on a 10-point scale was 4.3. Of the 553 respondents who take vacation annually with their family, 139 (25%) of them rated the likelihood of visiting Appomattox within the next 24 months as between 7 and 10. The summary findings for those likely visitors had the following characteristics: (a) adults over 44 years of age, (b) females more than males, (c) higher education exposure at all levels of college, (d) families who go on more than one vacation trip per year, (e) families who stay an average of two nights per trip, and (f) families that have two adults in the party with either no children or have children under the age of 8 years old. These would constitute the target market segments for Appomattox County family vacationers. Any promotional campaign should target this profile for messages and media upon which to present the messages.

### Group Conference / Convention Attendees

In the original project proposal to the EDA, conference / convention attendees were not included. However, based on interviews with individuals connected now or in the past five years to Appomattox

economic development and tourism, it was determined that this group of visitors is worth considering. There are many organizations that hold annual conferences or even multiple conferences within a year for the leadership teams of those organizations. Within Virginia, many of the sites chosen for these conferences have been in existence for years. If Appomattox were to have conference/convention facilities, the Community would realize additional revenues from this group of visitors. For the same reasons that the other visitor groups would consider Appomattox as a destination, group conference or convention visitors would come to enjoy the historical and entertainment venues within a centralized Virginia location. Appomattox is within 15 miles of the exact epicenter geographically of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This could benefit those attendees who must travel from the extremities of the state.

### Outdoor Theater Patrons

In the original project proposal to the EDA, the outdoor theater patron was considered an attractive market segment that could add local and regional guests as a separate draw with the visitors who live beyond the region. However, based on information obtained in personal interviews with and data provided by Mr. Michael Hardy, the Director of the Outdoor Drama Association, headquartered in North Carolina, the outlook for pursuing this venue does not appear to be profitable at this time.

The original proposal was to portray the historical events of the final week of the Army of Northern Virginia under the command of General Robert E. Lee in order to give context of the surrender and final battle scenes within Appomattox County for guests. Currently, the

National Park Service surrender site offers two slide shows with narration, but today's market prefer moving images, especially for those among the younger age cohorts. However, the recent trends in outdoor theater attendance and revenues have not been positive.

Historical plays have experienced more declines in attendance than Shakespeare-based plays. In addition, an outdoor theater would require significant capital investment with performances subject to the whims of nature. If recent summer weather patterns were to continue, they would wreak havoc on audience attendance and pose a potential liability exposure from injuries sustained during a lightning storm, for example. Another consideration would be the number of months during the year when the theater facilities likely would not be used, which would be the majority of the calendar year.

Unless the current trends in attendance at historical outdoor dramas are reversed, it would not be recommended to pursue this market segment. However, it is recommended that a video production be made of Lee's Final March and presented in an environmentally controlled theater within the proposed Welcome Center. This documentary film would provide the same context purpose as the film "The Story of a Patriot" does for Colonial Williamsburg. Further details are provided under the Proposed Plan section of this report.

In summary of the target market analysis, there are several significant market segments of tourists who visit Appomattox County now and likely would increase their visits and amount of revenues spent in the county if adequate lodging and dining facilities existed, and if there were a synergistic, aesthetically-pleasing arrangement of

historical venues to add to the existing sites (surrender site, Museum of the Confederacy, and the current Visitors Center).

## THE PROPOSED PLAN

In this section, the proposed plan to optimize the economic growth of Appomattox County and its citizens through an initial emphasis on tourism will be described in detail. It is based upon the research conducted for the feasibility report and the combined experience of the researcher in the fields of marketing, entertainment, and tourism. Further, the recommendations substantiate previous proposals from individuals involved with tourism for Appomattox County within the past five years. The proposed plan consists of two primary phases: (a) the first phase should include what can be achieved reasonably within the next 30 months when the Sesquicentennial anniversary occurs in Appomattox (April 2015); (b) the second phase should be a long range vision of what the Community could build to enhance tourism as funded through the revenues received by the Community from Phase 1 operations.

One of the major concerns expressed consistently among residents of Appomattox County and especially the Town residents is to preserve the historical ambiance. This principle should be enforced with due diligence because, to detract from the essence of the 1860s era in the historical facilities, would diminish the tourism value and thereby negatively affect attendance. Comparisons will be made throughout the proposed plan with Colonial Williamsburg serving as a model of the most successful venture in historical tourism within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Visitors want to step out of the 21<sup>st</sup>

Century and step back into history. Another powerful draw is that, rather than just walk through old buildings, there are 3,500 highly motivated and well trained staff members who manage the grounds, interact with the guests, and perform as re-enactors for the 750,000 paying guests annually.

## The Williamsburg Model

Colonial Williamsburg is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the year of this report (2012). The colonial portion is now managed and owned by a non-profit foundation. Current ticket prices to access some of the more popular buildings (e.g., Governor's Palace, the Capitol, various taverns, etc.) are \$39.95 per adult and \$12.95 per child under the age of 13. The ticket prices include a complimentary viewing (a \$3 value if purchased separately) of the 35-minute documentary film, "Williamsburg – The Story of a Patriot", that puts into perspective what took place in history within the buildings that visitors will view on the premises. Each of the theaters seats 244 people with alternating show times so that guests only need to wait approximately 15 minutes. Bus transportation around the perimeter of the colonial portion makes seven stops and runs until 10 PM. If purchased separately, a bus pass would cost \$2 per day per person. Visitors can access, without charge, the streets and some of the buildings of Revolutionary City, the name given to the old colonial section. In addition, visitors can walk to Revolutionary City from the Visitors Center rather than ride the buses.

A printed program is published for each week of the high tourist season with approximately 20 activities occurring throughout the day and typically 3-4 activities in the evening. Many of these activities include re-enactments. Some of the activities are designed for the

children to include the opportunity to rent a colonial costume to wear for the day, orientation tours just for children, and an online game that requires players to solve a mystery related to facilities within Revolutionary City. At one end of Duke of Gloucester Street, the main street in the old colonial area, are retail shops and dining facilities of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Within Revolutionary City are retail shops and dining facilities of the colonial period.

### The Appomattox Proposed Model

The foundation of this plan is to create a similar successful “community”, built upon the success of the existing National Park Service surrender site. In an interview with Mr. Reed Johnson, the NPS Superintendent, it was made clear that federal law requires that the national park land be preserved in its original state of 1865 to include the panoramic view from the surrender site. Further regulations stipulate that there can be no merging of ticket sales between the NPS site and any other site within the scope of this proposal. Uniformed agents of the National Park Service must physically collect the fees for being on the NPS property. Therefore, most proposed changes in this report will occur outside of the NPS site.

Within two miles of the NPS site, and closer to the town of Appomattox, is the recently opened Museum of the Confederacy that contains some of the artifacts that were present in Appomattox on April 9, 1865. Across from the NPS site to the north – away from town and over a ridge – is the Clover Hill Historical Village under the stewardship of the Appomattox Historical Society. The proximity of this village to the NPS site is conducive to ease of access for visitors. Near the Museum and across the highway is the 55-acre historical

battlefield site under the stewardship of the Civil War Preservation Trust, although access to the property is unavailable at the time of this report. The locations of these primary sites for Phase 1 should be the foundation for establishing an historical corridor from the battlefield site to the northern end of the National Park Service property near the Joel Sweeny cabin.

In fact, zoning should be an integral part of any forthcoming plan from the Community to ensure a coherent and professional appearance that also provides convenience of access for visitors. Historical sites are located within the historical district of Highway 24 and the town of Appomattox already. Commercial enterprises of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (e.g., lodging, food, shopping, etc.) should comprise the Business District along Highway 460 from the town limits to the State Police Tower or beyond where many commercial establishments already exist. A Welcome Center should be built near the intersections of highways 460, 24, and 26 where vehicles could have easy access into and out of the property with close proximity to the historical district. The Welcome Center should have ample parking for cars, vans, tour buses, recreational vehicles, etc.

Inside of the Welcome Center would be counters with ticket agents and concierge employees to answer questions about the tourist activities in Appomattox. The previously mentioned movie theater would be showing the approximately 30 minute documentary movie on Lee's Final March. Eventually the Welcome Center could include two theaters like Colonial Williamsburg with offset starting times so that visitors only wait approximately 15 minutes between shows. The Williamsburg Visitor Center theaters have the capacity of 244 seats

and the documentary film “Williamsburg – The Story of a Patriot”, the longest running film in history, is 35 minutes long. The proposed Appomattox theater should hold 150-200 seats with space available to add a second theater if consistent demand is created in the future.

The closest asset to Revolutionary City and its facilities that exists in Appomattox County is the Clover Hill Historical Village, which is located in an excellent proximity to the NPS Surrender Site at the first road past the main entrance to the NPS site, and about one-half mile up that side street. This proximity would accommodate a short trolley ride as another stop on the route.

The main street of Revolutionary City, Duke of Gloucester, is one mile long with the Governor’s Palace three blocks off the main street. The proposal for expanding the Clover Hill Historical Village would not require a full mile by three or four blocks. It could be successful with about one-half the size, possibly more square in how it is laid out than Revolutionary City. This would have the added benefit of being more convenient for visitors to walk, than the long hike down Duke of Gloucester Street. However, the current site of the Clover Hill Historical Village is not large enough. It was reported that there are vacant properties that are adjacent to the Clover Hill site that could accommodate expansion if they were to become available for purchase.

The key to the success of Colonial Williamsburg is not just the buildings, but also the re-enactors. This phenomenon is called *experiential tourism* that results in the *experience economy*. The Clover Hill Historical Village currently has various occasions during the

year where re-enactments occur. It is proposed that re-enactments become a regular part of the program at Clover Hill and that the property be open seven days per week during the height of the tourist season for Appomattox. The re-enactors at Colonial Williamsburg work during all months of the year with the exception of January, when they are on paid (primary actors) or unpaid (most employees) leave of absence and part of early February when they are attending seminars for their craft in preparation for the new season.

One EDA committee member suggested establishing a training center for re-enactors based in Appomattox and located at the Clover Hill Historical Village. The Training Center could operate during the offseason for Appomattox. This report is in support of that idea as another draw to the Appomattox Community requiring overnight lodging for those attending the training classes. Research indicated that Civil War re-enactment events are growing in the United States and are called *re-enactment tourism*. It is estimated that up to one-half million spectators watch 20,000-50,000 performers re-enact Civil War battles (Heath, 1998; Kilian, 2000; Wheeler, 2001).

An advantage of having re-enactments is two-fold: visitors who view the re-enactments need lodging and the re-enactors need lodging, probably more permanent lodging (housing) if Appomattox were to adopt the Colonial Williamsburg model where re-enactors are permanent entertainers vs. visitors on occasions. Wilhelm and Mottner (2005) stated, "Re-enactors may travel up to 200 miles to events and spend 3-5 days in an area, frequently with their families..." (p. 28). These re-enactors are committed to their lifestyle as evidenced by the travel expenses and the costs of purchasing outfits and equipment at a

minimum of \$800. In Wilhelm and Mottner's study, they found that the average annual dollar investment among Civil War re-enactors was \$5,700. The primary motivations for re-enactors are to educate people and have fun by "re-living a historical period for which they have a nostalgic longing" (Horowitz, 1998).

Most tourists who visit historical sites want to experience history through stories told, battles re-enacted, displays of period costuming and customs, and the ability to interact with the "townspeople" to ask questions about the period that are unique to contemporary practices. Parents who are heavily involved in their children's education desire to expose their children to the culture of the era being portrayed. Evidence of this was present in Colonial Williamsburg where children could rent period costumes for their day stepping back into history and participate in activities designed just for children.

Civil War battlefields are of great interest to tourists who visit historical sites in general and to Civil War Travelers specifically. Two such battles occurred in Appomattox County, albeit somewhat smaller by comparison with other local battles like Sailors Creek. The two local sites are the train station area where General George Armstrong Custer captured the Confederate supply train and the Appomattox battlefield where General John B. Gordon provided the battle report that led to General Robert E. Lee deciding to accept General Ulysses S. Grant's terms of surrender. General Custer adds an element of interest to most historically based tourists because of his famous demise from the hand of the Sioux in the Dakotas.

The current Appomattox train station has been preserved. The battlefield is in need of restoration to replicate the scenario of April 9, 1865, when General Gordon fought the Federal cavalry near town. The land, upon which the battle occurred, is owned by the Civil War Preservation Foundation. However, access to the battlefield would require some removal of existing facilities and a right-of-way granted to the property. The proposal would be for tour vehicles to enter the property with narrators who describe the battle that occurred there. On special occasions throughout the year, re-enactors could provide guests with the actual battle scene. The price of admission to the battlefield would be included in the historical visit package or purchased individually.

The existing Visitor Center at the train station is adequate for tourists being deposited there on a schedule from the public transit service, receive their orientation of the events that occurred at the original train depot, and then be exchanged with the next tour group coming through. By this plan, the very limited parking restrictions in the vicinity of the train station could be alleviated. Those visitors who wish to linger and visit the shops at the train station or other nearby downtown establishments could do so and re-enter the public transit system on the next available cycle. However, the existing Visitor Center is not adequate to provide the needs of a full-service Welcome Center that was proposed previously in this report. The theater area in the train station only seats a dozen or more visitors. In addition, the current Visitor Center is difficult to access with limited parking facilities, and the Gift Shop is small with a limited inventory. All of these attributes strongly suggest that another Welcome Center is

needed with more facilities, parking, and in a more accessible area near the highway system that runs through Appomattox.

A trolley service has been mentioned frequently in this report with a primary goal of reducing potential traffic congestion within the town of Appomattox, the proposed historical district of Highway 24, and even the routes to and from the town and the historical district. In addition, a trolley service would add an appearance of the 1860's era. The trolley service could connect the following points of interest: Welcome Center as the hub station with stops at the Museum of the Confederacy, the National Park Service, Clover Hill Historical Village, the restored battlefield, and the existing Visitor Center at the train depot in downtown Appomattox. The trolley service also could be routed to the new lodging and dining district down Highway 460 West toward the State Police Tower for the purpose of alleviating traffic congestion. Hotel guests could leave their vehicles in the hotel parking lot and use the trolley service for conveyance around Appomattox.

In 2004, the National Park Service commissioned a traffic study and proposal for changes that would enhance safety around the NPS grounds on Virginia Highway 24. That proposal was not adopted by the local and state authorities for various reasons. However, in addition to providing a safer environment for visitors, having features like tree-lined roads, pedestrian and bicycle paths along the route, would enhance the aesthetic appearance of the two miles from the Museum of the Confederacy and the main entrance to the NPS site and possibly the intersection of Highway 24 and River Ridge Road, the turn to the Clover Hill Historical Village. Appendix 4 in this report contains an excerpt from the 2004 Traffic Study Report with a drawing of what the

greenway could be for enhancing the appearance of the historical district. It is the recommendation of this report that a portion of the proposed Traffic Study be re-evaluated for its aesthetic appeal to the primary tourist area of the County and its contribution to the safety of guests who are walking or biking in the area.

Without sufficient lodging facilities of a caliber that would attract tourists, the other proposals in this report are moot. The primary revenue sources from the proposed emphasis on tourism would come from the lodging tax revenues, and the sales tax revenues from dining and other retail sales associated with the historical venue of the Community. While there are a few hotels in place and additional rooms through Bed & Breakfast facilities, there needs to be more lodging rooms from franchised brands that are preferred by tourists in general and families specifically. For those who wish to camp, there are facilities nearby in the state parks. For guests who do not like to camp, most would be required to stay in nearby Lynchburg or Farmville, leaving the Community without that tax revenue. As previously reported, the Hampton Inn in Farmville may be enjoying revenues that otherwise would be coming to Appomattox.

The proposed solution would be to attract hotel owners to build in Appomattox. There was an initial attempt to attract a Fairfield Inn by Marriott a few years ago, but that did not occur, primarily because of the lack of infrastructure facilities, namely reliable water and sewer sources (based on personal interview by telephone with Mr. David Mendes of the Marriott Corporation). At the time, Marriott was willing to include a small conference center facility. It is the recommendation of this report that a franchised hotel brand be built equivalent to at

least the medium range of Marriott brand (e.g., Courtyard by Marriott or the actual Marriott brand) just off the Highway 460 corridor in the proposed Commercial District. Other potential hotel chains to pursue for the hotel/conference center could be Hilton, Sheraton, Wyndham, etc. Standard brands like Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Sleep In, etc. may be contacted to determine their interest in the area as a secondary source of lodging. Why would hotel brands consider investing in Appomattox County?

The primary promotional items that can be delivered to potential hotel franchisors in order to convince them to invest in Appomattox are a solid business plan and a published commitment from Community officials that the plan for enhancing the historical and entertainment venues within the Community will become a reality. For those who have heard of the past five years of stalled progress in building tourism within Appomattox County, it may require personal visits from local officials to convince the hotel franchisors of the new strategy to move forward. In addition, there needs to be a solid plan to provide accessibility to vital infrastructure facilities (e.g., water, sewer, broadband communications, etc.) without encumbrances that have existed in the past. The sales pitch to give hotel brand managers for why they should invest now is to ask them whether they want to be part of the foundation of the new Appomattox or an outsider scrambling to get in on the action later.

Though it is important to pursue multiple hotel franchisors, it is critical that one franchise win the opportunity to build the convention / conference center hotel. It is the recommendation of this study that the convention/conference space accommodate 300-500 attendees.

This would include a main meeting hall and smaller meeting room facilities. There should be restaurant facilities on the premise to cater to the needs of the conference attendees. It would be best if the facilities could resemble the 1860's time era with photos of local attractions on the walls to remind guests of what Appomattox offers visitors. It would be good if this convention/conference center hotel could be located nearby (within a mile of) the new Welcome Center for convenience.

Recently the City of Fredericksburg and the Fredericksburg Economic Development Authority became supporting partners with the University of Mary Washington Foundation and were the first recipients of the new Virginia Tourism Development Financing project, an incentive program adopted by the Virginia General Assembly in 2011 (See Appendix 5). The project consists of building a Hyatt Hotel with 93 studio rooms or suites, several meeting and conference rooms for public rent and 24-hour food and beverage service for guests. There will be approximately 1,400 square feet of retail space and possibly a day spa included on the property. Funding for this project from the state and matching contributions from the developer provide financing for up to 20 percent of the project's total cost.

The recommendation in this report is to not pursue the state funds initially. Instead, the first efforts should be to seek businesses that would be willing to fund the entire project for the opportunity to build in the area as an investment for the anticipated increase in tourists who desire to stay for a few days in Appomattox vs. Lynchburg or Farmville. If potential hotel developers are concerned about fully investing in a project within Appomattox, then efforts could

be made by the EDA to pursue funding from the Tourism Development Funding agency.

Another possible business partner to enhance the full service capability of the proposed enhancement to the historical venues would be a local Tour Bus Company to provide excursions to neighboring tourist sites (e.g., the Blue Ridge Parkway, Red Hill, Poplar Forest, D-Day Memorial, Sailors Creek, the Retreat Trail, Charlottesville, Monticello, etc.). This company could also operate the local trolley service. In addition, the company could provide service to out-of-town tour buses by providing fuel, dumping of waste, mechanical support, and washing the busses.

Other potential venues that could contribute positively to the attractiveness of Appomattox for visitors would be a Waterpark and an Outlet Mall. These would need to be developed by private companies. At the time of this report, it may not appear to be feasible for Waterpark and/or Outlet Mall developers to invest in Appomattox County, but if hotels, restaurants, and enhancements to the historical venues began to reap sustained increases in visitors to Appomattox, developers of entertainment and shopping centers might choose to invest. Success breeds success as in the case of Colonial Williamsburg. It would be a great asset to Appomattox County's tourist reputation if a Waterpark and/or Outlet Mall were in place by 2015.

In summary, the proposal is to begin to emulate the success of Colonial Williamsburg that has achieved the status of top tourist site in a state where tourism is a prime industry. This can be achieved by Appomattox County investing in six projects, starting late in 2012 and

being completed by the end of 2014, the year before the Sesquicentennial Anniversary arrives in Appomattox. These six projects are listed in the suggested priority order:

(1) Attract at least one hotel chain to build a 150-200 room hotel with conference center and on-premise restaurant that can accommodate 300-500 individuals

(2) Build a Welcome Center near the 3-highway intersection and adjacent to the historical district

(3) Expand the Clover Hill Historical Village to include more buildings, open seven days per week, and increase the re-enactments to a daily schedule with the exception of non-tourist season

(4) Restore the battlefield site with military memorabilia of the Civil War times

(5) Establish a public transit system, preferably a historical version of a trolley or similar system, to provide a historical conveyance for visitors while reducing the potential for traffic congestion in key districts

(6) Build the greenway corridor along Highway 24 similar to the 2004 Traffic Study commissioned by the National Park Service.

In addition to the priority projects listed above, it is recommended that the Community pursue business partnerships with a local tour bus company, a waterpark developer, and a retail outlet center developer for potential long term or even short term tourism investments.

How should this strategic plan be implemented? Who will manage the recommended projects to ensure their successful completion? What organization can be a focal point for investments

towards fulfilling the recommended projects? Two examples come to mind: the Virginia Tourism Corporation and the non-profit Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. It is recommended that a local non-profit Tourism Corporation be established to serve as that focal point for capital investment and management of the tourism projects in the Community.

## REVENUE IMPACT STUDY

What financial impact might these proposals have on the Appomattox Community? This section will provide a pro form analysis of what incremental revenues could be achieved if the Community were to pursue the proposals within this study. As a reminder, the overall strategy is to improve the synergies of existing tourist attractions within the Community so that visitors will enjoy their stay in the area, desire to extend their stay for 2-3 days, and tell their social network about how great Appomattox is as a tourist destination.

According to Governor McDonnell's office, \$20.4 billion were spent on tourism in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 2011 (Governor, 2012). This was an eight percent increase over tourism dollars in the previous year. The 2011 tourist expenditures resulted in \$1.32 billion of state and local tax income with every county having experienced an increase between the two years. The average spending on leisure travel in 2010 was \$443 per trip per visitor with an average number of 3.6 nights per trip. Of all visitors to Virginia, 83% were for leisure trips vs. business trips. Of the \$19 billion spent on leisure trips to Virginia in 2010, 63% of the average \$443/trip expenditures were on food services (\$5.4 billion), lodging (\$3.7 billion), general retail purchasing

(\$1.8 billion), and entertainment (\$1.4 billion) (Association of U. S. Travel, 2011).

To compare Appomattox County to Williamsburg City in 2010 tourism expenditures, the following table is provided.

Table 2

*Comparison of Appomattox County with Williamsburg City on Selected Tourism Data*

|              | Expenditures | Sales Taxes | Local Taxes | Employment |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Appomattox   | \$8.89M      | \$0.433M    | \$0.268M    | 100        |
| Williamsburg | \$458.71M    | \$17.64M    | \$16.21M    | 5,290      |

*Source: The Economic Impact of Domestic Travel on Virginia Counties 2010: A Study Prepared for the Virginia Tourism Corporation by the Association of U. S. Travel, Washington, DC, October 2011*

In a report issued by the Virginia Tourism Corporation on September 5, 2012 (see Appendix 6), the expenditures for Appomattox County had grown in 2011 to \$9.44 million, which represented an increase of 6.2% over expenditures in 2010, which is less than the average 8% growth of tourism among counties in Virginia during the same years. In addition, there was no significant increase in sales taxes (\$0.440M) or local taxes (\$.272M) for Appomattox, and the employment related to the tourism industry remained at 100 employees. As illustrated in Appendix 6, there are no revenues reported for excise taxes from lodging, food, or admissions to entertainment venues (except in 2007 for the latter category). This indicates where the greatest opportunity exists for Appomattox County in realizing new revenues.

According to the website HotelsByCity.com on September 8, 2012, there are 76 hotels and Bed & Breakfast Inns in Williamsburg with a total of 9,435 rooms. By comparison, there are 65 rooms available in Appomattox. If one were to factor in the ratio of 750,000 visitors last year to Williamsburg with the 216,220 visitors to the NPS surrender site in Appomattox (29%), it would indicate that Appomattox should have approximately 2,720 rooms to accommodate the same ratio of guests to available rooms. However, it must be acknowledged that many of those rooms in Williamsburg hold visitors who do not visit Colonial Williamsburg but rather visit the outlet malls and Busch Gardens or William & Mary University. If the Community could grow into a multidimensional tourist destination like Williamsburg, there would be a need for thousands of rooms someday.

By the same token, one can calculate the number of rooms that could accommodate the existing visitor count to the NPS Surrender Site if visitors would be willing to stay overnight. If two-thirds of the visitors to the NPS site chose to remain in the area for an average of two nights with three people in each visitor party, the demand for lodging rooms would be conservatively 265 rooms.  $[216,200 \text{ visitors} \times \frac{2}{3} \text{ (two-thirds)} \div 3 \text{ (three per visitor party)} \times 2 \text{ (two nights' stay)} \div 365 \text{ (days per year)} = 265 \text{ rooms}]$ . This does not account for growth in the number of tourists visiting, conference attendees, family reunion members, etc. These estimates are very conservative but at least should justify the establishment of one hotel facility with 150-200 rooms. When visitors stay overnight, they spend more on dining and shopping, in addition to the admissions fees for attending the entertainment venues.

## SUMMARY

Any journey begins with the first step. Success attracts success. If a hotel with conference center could be established in Appomattox, and visitors began to stay overnight, eat, and spend money, it is a strong likelihood that other hotels and dining facilities would follow. One last reminder is that the Appomattox community has approximately 30 months remaining before the Sesquicentennial Anniversary of Appomattox arrives. Between now and then, the number of visitors should increase by an estimated 33% based on last year's data, and potentially much more after Gettysburg's anniversary next year in July 2013. Because of the increase in visitors expected over the next 2.5 years, what they report back to their social network becomes critical for Appomattox. If they should report what they see today, it will not go well for tourism and potentially other industries that might consider moving operations to the Community. If the many visitors report back that Appomattox is growing dynamically with many new attractions and are friendly towards visitors, the future could be bright economically for the Community.

Now is the time for decision. Now is the time for action. Now is the time for reconciliation locally and setting up the message of reconciliation on a national stage. Appomattox: Where the Nation Reunited.

## NEXT STEPS

The following is a recommended process for achieving the plan set forth in this report.

1. Approve this Feasibility Report.
2. Obtain approval of this Feasibility Report from the Appomattox County Board of Supervisors
3. Develop tactical plans for implementing the recommendations of this Feasibility Report to include capital and expense budgets
4. Develop a promotional campaign to attract key investors for each of the capital projects recommended in this Feasibility Report
5. Obtain public support for the recommendations in this Feasibility Report
6. Secure the investors and finalize the tactical plans for implementation
7. If current trends indicate a favorable economic forecast, begin implementing the tactical plans to include hiring an overall project leader dedicated to completing the tactical plans and sub-project leaders dedicated to each of the key components in the recommendations of this Feasibility Report

Respectfully submitted,

Kendrick W. Brunson, D.B.A., M.B.A.  
1061 Cedar Rock Drive  
Forest, VA 24551

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## APPENDIX 1

### National Survey of Appomattox Name Recognition

U.S. Census Bureau

Date of Data Pull: 7/1/2012

Total U.S. Population: 313,854,449 now 308,745,538 in 2011

Under 5 (6.5%), under 18 (23.7%), 65+ (13.3%)

Female (50.8%), Male (49.2%)

High school graduates 25+ (85.0%), Bachelor's degree+ (27.9%)

All Responses (1,224)

Female (49.7%), Male (50.3%)

18-29 (15%), 30-44 (23.9%), 45-60 (35.5%), 61+ (25.6%)

Less than HS (1.8%), HS (9.6%), Some College (27.3%),

Associate/Bachelor (36.4%), Graduate Degree (24.9%)

Yes Responses (553)

Female (40.5%), Male (59.5%)

18-34 (11.9%), 35-44 (12.1%), 45-54 (23.9%), 55-64 (29.5%),  
65+ (22.6%)

Northeast (20.3%), East (4.5%), Southeast (22.4%), Midwest  
(26.6%), West (9.9%), Southwest (10.1%), Northwest (6.1%)

Less than HS (0.4%), HS (3.3%), Some College (16.5%), Associate  
(9.4%), Bachelor (28.4%), Graduate Work (12.1%), Graduate  
Degree (30.0%)

Asian (1.6%), Black (1.6%), Caucasian (91.1%), Hispanic (2.0%),  
Native (0.7%), Other (3.1%)

## Comparative Data

Age: 18-44 (All=38.9%), (Yes=34%); 45+ (All=61.1%),  
(Yes=66%)

Education: < College Degree (All=38.7%), (Yes=20.2%);  
Undergrad Degree (All=36.4%), (Yes=49.9%); Grad Degree  
(All=24.9%), (Yes=30.0%)

## APPENDIX 2

### Example of Scripted Re-Enactments

#### Red Fields

Characters: 3 Male, 1 Female

-*Custer*: General George Armstrong Custer of Sheridan's cavalry

-*Randol*: Colonel under Custer

-*Woman*: Resident of Redfields

-*Capt. Lee*: provost in Custer's cavalry

*(Rain falls lightly to the ground. A train whistle sounds in the distance. The faint roar of its engine is barely audible.) Rain throughout script*

Randol: Boy, I'll never forget that rainy April day when our regiment rode through Appomattox Station. We was on our way to stop General Robert E Lee's men from getting to train loads of supplies. His men were ragged, hungry and running out of ammunition. General George Custer led us on that grey, wet day, and he was no doubt in an awful hurry to capture those supply trains waitin' for the rebs. *(chucking)* Little did he know he'd be saving two poor, innocent women in the process...

*(Horse hooves beat down on a dirt road. A train whistle sounds a little closer.)*

Custer: Alright, men. We have confirmed that there are at least three whole trainloads of supplies awaiting the rebels at Appomattox Station. We are about mile away. I've already ordered Pennington and the remaining regiments southwards to tear up the rails toward Lynchburg. Those trains won't be escaping anytime soon.

Colonel Randal.

Randol: Yes, sir, General Custer.

Custer: Now's the chance for your stars. Don't let anything stop you, old fellow.

Randol: Yes, sir.

*(Two women scream in the distance. The voice of one woman grows closer.)*

Woman (*screaming, frantic*): Help! Help! Someone!

Custer (*under his breath*): What the devil?—

Woman (*between sobs*): Please Help! They're robbing us! Those men...They're trying to murder us! (*to Custer*) Please, sir, help us!

(*sounds of Custer dismounting his horse and running toward the house*)

Randol (*reminiscing*): Without saying a word General Custer was off his horse and rushing toward an elegant mansion nearby, from which those two ladies had run screaming. He dashed up the walk just in time to catch a man in United States uniform running from the front door. With only his fist as a weapon, he almost annihilated the miserable scalawag. Then, running through the house he caught another scoundrel making his exit through the rear door. Catching up an axe, he threw it, hitting the brute in the back of his head. Then, in a flash of a moment, he was in the saddle again...

Woman: Thank you, sir. Thank you...

Custer: Madam, I am terribly sorry. We do not allow this sort of thing. I assure you it will not happen again.

Captain Lee.

Capt. Lee: Yes, sir General Custer.

Custer: Place a guard over the home immediately. These ladies do not need to be disturbed again.

Capt. Lee: Consider it done, sir.

(*Horses neigh and gallop down the road. train whistle again in distance*)

Randol: And with that we all charged down the road at a terrific speed. I believe we had those trains captured not more than five minutes later. (*chuckling*) Well...maybe that's a bit of an exaggeration.

## APPENDIX 3

### National Survey of Family Vacationers

Of the respondents, 14% stated that they did not take a vacation of at least two-night's duration in a year. The remaining responses that were usable were 553 so a statistically sound sample with 95% confidence level and +/- 4.17% error margin was achieved.

The average number of vacations taken per year was 2.3 and the average nightly stay per vacation was 3.1 nights. The top types of lodging were: 1. Hotels (60.3%); 2. Motels (30.4%); 3. Staying with Others (28.1%); 4. Cabins (19.4%); 5. Condos (16.5%)

Average rates paid per night: 1. \$101-\$150 (32.1%); 2. \$76-\$100 (27.7%); 3. \$50-\$75 (17.9%); 4. Below \$50 (12.7%); 5. \$151-\$200 (11.8%); 6. Over \$200 (7.6%). The percentages do not add up to 100% because some respondents answered in more than one category, but it still gives an indication of the type of lodging expense expected by travelers today.

Food Preferences: 1. American (69.8%); 2. Casual Dining (62.6%); 3. Mexican (50.9%); 4. Pizza (50.2%); 5. Fast Food (47.7%); 6. Steakhouse (47.5%); 7. Italian (45.3%); 8. Seafood (44.1%)

Activities listing: 1. Historical sites (66.0%); 2. Shopping (64.4%); 3. Swimming (62.8%); 4. Museums (57.7%); 5. Hiking (37.9%); 6. Water Parks (30.2%); 7. Musical Shows (29.0%); 8. Camping

(25.9%); 9. Fishing (23.7%); 10. Biking (23.6%); 11. Outdoor Drama (16.7%); 12. Golf (15.6%)

Rank Top Activities (limited to three places): The top four activities were: 1. Historical (451); 2. Swimming (429); 3. Shopping (329); 4. Museums (308). The numbers in parentheses represent an index where a 1st place choice was equal to 3 points; 2nd place was equal to 2 points; 3rd place was equal to 1 point. The index is a sum of the points.

The key question on the likelihood of whether the respondents would be willing to come to Appomattox within the next 24 months if all of the activities and accommodations that they wanted were provided resulted in a 4.3 on a 10-point scale. As a whole, this is not a good number, however, proximity to vacation sites is a major consideration in the current economy. The residence of the respondents was not established on an individual respondent level in this survey so the geographical proximity to Appomattox could not be determined.

Of the 553 responses, 139 gave a value of 7, 8, 9, or 10 (generally considered favorable), which represents 25% of the sample. The following is a summary of the demographics of the targeted 139 respondents.

Gender: 71 were females (51.8%); 66 were males (48.2%)

Age: 3 were under 18 (2.2%); 13 were ages 18-29 (9.6%); 31 were ages 30-44 (23.0%); 51 were ages 45-60 (37.8%); 37 were over 60 (27.4%); 65.2% of respondents who stated the likelihood of coming to

Appomattox within the next 24 months were over the age of 44; 88.1% were over the age of 30.

Education: 5 had less than a high school diploma (3.6%); 14 had a high school diploma (10.2%); 36 had some college (26.3%); 47 had an associate or bachelor degree (34.3%); 35 had done graduate work (25.5%); 60% of the respondents who stated the likelihood of coming to Appomattox within the next 24 months had completed college; 86.1% had some exposure to college.

The following represents a profile of those who gave a value of 7-10 on a 10-point scale of the likelihood of visiting Appomattox within the next 24 months.

Ages 45 and above are more likely to visit (65.2% vs. 57.7% of all respondents in the age category)

Females are more likely than males to visit (51.8% vs. 48% of all respondents)

Education is not really a factor by comparison (mixed results among likely visitors and unlikely visitors)

Number of vacation trips: likely visitors exceed the general population among those who take 2 or more trips per year (77.7% vs. 66.5%).

Nightly stays on average: those who average 2-4 nights polled higher with 1 and 5+ nights polling lower. The significant group more likely to visit would be the 2-night average group (36.0% vs. 30.7% for the

general sample).

Adults in vacationing party: the only group that polled stronger in the likely visitors than the general sample was 2 adults in the party (68.3% vs. 63.0%).

Children in vacationing party: those with children under the age of 8 were more likely to visit than those with children between the ages of 8 and 17 (31.6% vs. 25.9%). For those with vacationing children between the ages of 8 and 17, the likely visitors were 34.5% vs. 44.0%. The deficit grew with each older child category (e.g., 8-11, 12-14, 15-17). Those without children represented almost 57% of both samples, the likely visitors and those not likely to visit (the difference between the two samples was one-tenth of a percent: 56.8% vs. 56.9%). The one group in favor of visiting was 2 adults with no children (41.7% vs. 36.6%).

In summary, Appomattox County should target adults over 44, females more than males, generally those who have been exposed to college, who go on more than one vacation trip per year, staying an average of two nights per trip, with 2 adults in the party and either no children or children under the age of 8 (maybe 11).

# APPENDIX 4

## Excerpt from Traffic Study for NPS (2004)

### Route 24 Traffic Calming Concepts

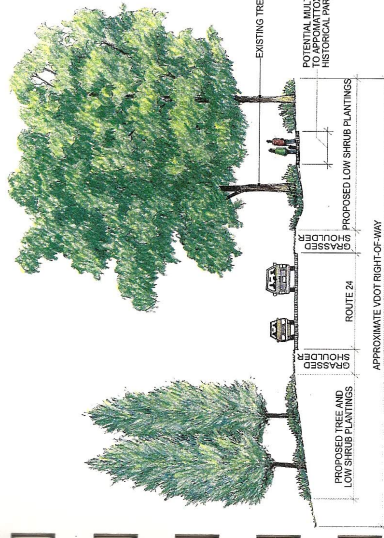


FINAL DRAFT: June 2004



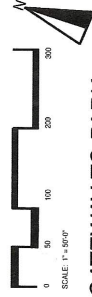
\*PINCH POINT - INFORMAL PLANTING TO NARROW LOOK & FEEL OF ROAD

REDESIGNED SIGN & ENTRANCE PLANTINGS  
RELOCATE SIGN ~100' WEST OF EXISTING LOCATION  
PEDESTRIAN CROSSING FOR FUTURE APPOMATOX NHP TRAILS



**A** CROSS SECTION:  
PINCH POINT NEAR CHURCH

Page 10



### 1 WESTERN GATEWAY TO PARK

Sheet 2 of 2

NOTES:  
Any future pathway in this area is contingent upon the commitment by the Town and County to construct a pathway connection into Town (over the bypass).

**APPOMATOX COURT HOUSE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK**  
Route 24 Traffic Calming Concepts: Western Hall  
April 2004  
Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, PC  
H.W. Lochner, Inc.  
PRELIMINARY: FOR GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY

Lardner/Klein Landscape Architects, P.C. and H.W. Lochner, Inc.

## APPENDIX 5

### ***UMW Foundation Hotel Will Be First to Benefit from State Incentive Program***

June 21, 2012 By [bboyer](#)

A five-story Hyatt Place hotel slated for construction next month by the University of Mary Washington Foundation will be the first to benefit from the new Virginia Tourism Development Financing project, an incentive program adopted by the Virginia General Assembly in 2011.

[The announcement was made Wednesday, June 20 from the office of Gov. Bob McDonnell.](#)

“Virginia’s tourism industry provides thousands of good, quality jobs across the state, which is why I have made tourism a key part of my economic development initiatives,” said Gov. McDonnell in a news release. “In 2011, we passed legislation creating the Tourism Development Financing Program to help increase tourism and new business in Virginia. Tourism is a multi-billion dollar industry in Virginia that supports hundreds of thousands of jobs in the state. The Tourism Development Financing Program allows identified, locally-approved tourism projects to retain a portion of local and state sales tax to complete financing for a project to help Virginia’s tourism sector continue to grow. The project announced today in Fredericksburg is the first to be approved as part of this new program. The new hotel and mixed-use development will allow for more tourism in the city, and will bring greater economic growth and opportunity to the region.”

Jeff Rountree, chief executive officer for the UMW Foundation, said that the foundation is proud to be the recipient of the commonwealth’s first award under the tourism incentive program.

“The combined incentives between the City of Fredericksburg and the Commonwealth of Virginia made the development of our Hyatt Place hotel possible in Fredericksburg and will meet all of the objectives set forth by Gov. McDonnell, including the creation of over 55 new jobs and increased tax revenue for both the locality and the state. The UMW Foundation and the university continue to play a leading role in economic development in our region and the Governor’s new program has allowed this project to move forward, contributing yet again to the

economic well-being of our community.”

The incentive program allows approved tourism projects to temporarily retain a portion of state and local tax revenue generated from the project combined with a matching contribution from the developer to provide gap financing for up to 20 percent of the project’s total cost.

The City of Fredericksburg and Fredericksburg Economic Development Authority are supporting partners of the hotel project. The project is estimated to generate \$3.27 million for the city in tax revenues over 10 years.


The Hyatt Place will be located in the second phase of the Eagle Village mixed-use development adjacent to UMW’s Fredericksburg campus. The hotel, to be situated between Giant Food and the Eagle Village Executive Offices, will include 93 studio rooms or suites, several meeting and conference rooms for public rent and 24-hour food and beverage service for guests. The 66,500-square-foot facility also will include an indoor pool and a fitness center. In addition, the building will house approximately 1,400 square feet of retail space and possibly a day spa, according to Rountree.

Construction will begin in July, after the buildings in the planned hotel space are demolished. The hotel is expected to open by fall 2013.

## APPENDIX 6

# Appomattox Tourism Data

Appomattox

Virginia is for Lovers 

|            | 2007   | 2008   | 2009   | 2010   | 2011   | Percent Change |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|
| Population | 14,193 | 14,529 | 14,552 | 15,026 | 15,041 | 0.1%           |

|                                    | 2007         | 2008         | 2009         | 2010         | 2011         | Percent Change |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Travel Economic Impacts</b>     |              |              |              |              |              |                |
| Expenditures                       | \$ 8,570,246 | \$ 8,770,605 | \$ 8,587,801 | \$ 8,887,599 | \$ 9,443,438 | 6.3%           |
| Payroll                            | \$ 1,700,953 | \$ 1,734,082 | \$ 1,771,460 | \$ 1,776,531 | \$ 1,800,702 | 1.4%           |
| Employment                         | 102          | 102          | 103          | 100          | 100          | 0.2%           |
| State Tax Receipts                 | \$ 413,292   | \$ 412,782   | \$ 431,923   | \$ 433,687   | \$ 439,902   | 1.4%           |
| Local Tax Receipts                 | \$ 260,035   | \$ 268,637   | \$ 266,041   | \$ 268,543   | \$ 272,027   | 1.3%           |
| <b>Local Excise Tax Collection</b> |              |              |              |              |              |                |
| Lodging Excise Tax Collected       | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | n/a            |
| Food Service Excise Tax Collected  | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | n/a            |
| Admissions Excise Tax Collected    | \$ 125       | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | \$ 0         | n/a            |
| <b>Local Excise Tax Rates</b>      |              |              |              |              |              |                |
| Lodging Excise Tax Rate            | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 5.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | n/a            |
| Food Service Excise Tax Rate       | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 5.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | n/a            |
| Admissions Excise Tax Rate         | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | 0.0 %        | n/a            |

**\* Notes**

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