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SURPLUS STATE LAND TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO LIGHT INDUSTRIAL PARK AND SOLAR FARM

*Project marks achievement of region working together across borders—
generating shared revenue and facilities access for six participating localities*



(YORKTOWN, VA, Oct. 27, 2020) – Last week, the Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA) voted to approve acquiring the 432-acre former Commonwealth of Virginia Emergency Fuel Farm. It also approved the concurrent lease of a portion of that property for development as a solar energy facility, representing a significant step forward for economic development in Hampton Roads.

The property, located at 1801 Penniman Road in York County, had been declared surplus. Six of EVRIFA's 10 member-jurisdictions—York, Isle of Wight, Poquoson, Williamsburg, Hampton and Newport News—have agreed to participate together to fund costs associated with this initiative and to share in the revenues that will be generated as a result of the solar facility construction and the potential development that could occur on the remainder of the property.

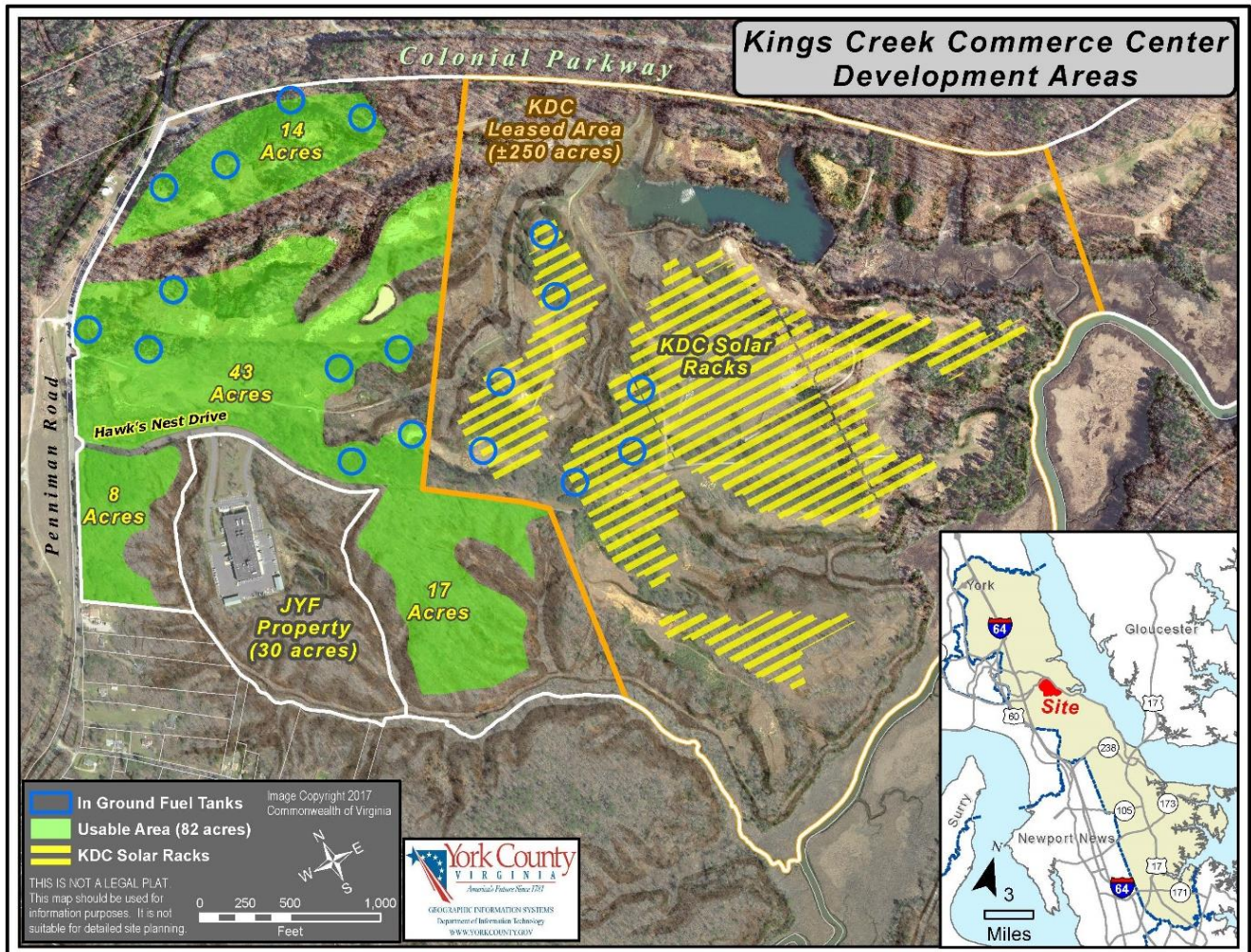
It shows a commitment to cooperation—rather than competition—among the area's cities and counties," said J. Mark Carter, chair of EVRIFA and a board member of York County's Economic Development Authority. "York County is pleased to be the host locality for this initial project as it will convert a long-abandoned, environmentally constrained site into productive use. More importantly, it represents a model for the cooperative spirit and focus by which the EVRIFA member-jurisdictions will have the opportunity to work together on other economic development projects within the Hampton Roads region."

The EVRIFA, whose formation was funded through a grant from GO Virginia, currently includes James City County, Williamsburg, Gloucester, York County, Newport News, Hampton, Poquoson, Franklin, Chesapeake and Isle of Wight. It functions as a shell company, with the goal of spinning off specific projects with two or more regional partners. The Penniman Road site is its first attempt at a project.

The project will involve leasing approximately 250 acres of this property to solar development company for a solar energy generation facility. The remaining land will be named Kings Creek Commerce Center, to be marketed for light industrial development—which might include a testing site for unmanned aerial craft. Local demand for such a "drone park" is high; companies in the drone development business want a site to test and market their products in this growing high-tech sector. Currently there are limited options for testing and demonstrating drones in Hampton Roads.

The Penniman site was an abandoned Navy fuel farm that had been acquired by the state back in the 1980s. York County's EDA had little to no income from the property, and an effort to partner with a golf course developer there had stalled after he had completed initial rough grading for the course—a move that left it well suited for light industrial use.

"The property is easily accessible from I-64, has water and sewer service on site, and the availability of power from a solar facility presents some intriguing development opportunities. The location is virtually in the middle of the Hampton Roads-Richmond megaregion, which may appeal to companies wanting to serve both markets," noted Jim Noel, York County economic development director.



About EVRIFA

The Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA) was formed in accordance with the Commonwealth of Virginia's Regional Industrial Facilities Act for the purpose of providing a regional authority mechanism to enhance the economic base of the member localities on a cooperative basis. The initial formation of EVRIFA was funded through a grant from GO Virginia.

The following member localities comprise EVRIFA: Chesapeake, City of Franklin, Gloucester County, City of Hampton, Isle of Wight County, James City County, City of Newport News, City of Poquoson, City of Williamsburg, York County

About the York County OED and EDA

The primary mission of York County's Office of Economic Development (OED) and Economic Development Authority (EDA) is to create a diverse economic base by the aggressive recruitment, expansion and retention of businesses, industries, and tourism, thus expanding the tax base and capital investment in the County and providing new employment opportunities for its citizens.

The Office of Economic Development works in cooperation with many regional and state agencies to pursue its mission. Key among these allies are the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Greater Williamsburg Partnership, Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center, and local Chambers of Commerce. Perhaps the most important ally is the York County Economic Development Authority. Established in 1972, the EDA is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and has unique powers established in the Code of Virginia. The EDA is a conduit for non-taxable industrial revenue

bonds, can legally own, develop, and sell or lease commercial real estate, and can provide incentives necessary to close deals within targeted industry sectors.

Learn more about the Economic Development Authority and its resources at:

<https://www.yesyorkcounty.com/>

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