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## **With a New \$202.5 Million Convention Center and Dramatic Changes, Virginia Beach Entices Planners to “Bring it to the Beach!”**

### *New Facility Boasts Over 500,000 square feet of space*

(Virginia Beach, Va., 2007) – In the midst of a bustling metropolitan city on the edge of a dramatic coastline, Virginia Beach is the perfect destination for a rich meeting experience. This locale, combined with the new Virginia Beach Convention Center, provides a perfect backdrop for meetings, conventions and trade shows for groups throughout the country.

Virginia Beach laid the groundwork to become one of the nation’s most sought after year-round meeting destinations. Center stage in the city’s renaissance is the new \$202.5 million Virginia Beach Convention Center. The new state-of-the-art facility was completed in January 2007 and offers over 500,000 gross square feet of space and includes a 150,000 sq. ft. column-free exhibit hall, 28,929 sq. ft. of meeting space and a 31,029 sq. ft. ballroom. Serviced by a seasoned staff of service-oriented professionals, the facility offers competitive rates, 2,230 free parking spaces and is situated just blocks from one of the mid-Atlantic’s most beautiful beaches.

“The facility was designed to provide convention attendees with a first-class Convention Center that has flexibility and premier amenities throughout the building,” said James B. Ricketts, director of the Virginia Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau. “The new Virginia Beach Convention Center offers the quality and excellence that meeting planners have come to expect.”

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### **Virginia Beach Convention Center Exterior**

In today's world, a meeting must be an experience. World-renowned architectural firm Skidmore Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM) captured the essence of the coastal destination in the Convention Center's design and theme. Dynamic use of water, wood and natural light is integrated throughout the building. At the Convention Center's entrance, a soaring, nautical glass-curtain wall appears to float in pools of water both inside and outside the building. Guests walk across wooden boardwalks to access the building. A "porch-like" venue for an outdoor experience is adjacent to an enclosed pre-function area in front of the ballroom. From the 10-story observation deck, attendees can view the oceanfront skyline, as well as observe the incredible air-mastery of the F/A-18 Super Hornets based at Naval Air Station Oceana.

### **Virginia Beach Convention Center Interior**

Inside the Virginia Beach Convention Center, the exhibit hall - divisible by four - has 40-foot ceilings along with 10 ft. x 10 ft. grids permanently etched into the floor to facilitate setting up of exhibits. Easy access to the exhibit halls is provided by 21 loading docks and four street-level ramps. Each of the four hall subdivisions are supported by services including: meeting room suites, concessions, ample and handsomely appointed pre-function and registration spaces, show management offices overlooking the exhibit hall, conveniently located registration, storage rooms and other support areas. An expansive video wall, four 90 ft. x 9 ft. sections, provides both art and information to the pre-function area.

### **State-of-the-Art Technology**

The Convention Center provides the latest in wired and wireless communications technologies. The wood-paneled, 31,029 square-foot ballroom utilizes programmable LED lighting to provide special effects lighting never before used in a ballroom. Ample electrical service is supplied to the ballroom, as well as an overhead grid of rigging points to support the most demanding of special audio or visual requirements. Utility service is provided on a 30-foot grid in the exhibit hall floor and contains 60 or 100-amp electrical service, fiber optic and category-VI cable, water and drain service.

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A network of empty 6-inch conduits is located throughout the exhibit hall to support special needs. Similar amenities are located throughout the meeting rooms, the ballroom and all pre-function spaces.

### **Accommodations and Beyond the Convention Center**

With nearly 12,000 hotel rooms citywide and 3,500 committable rooms within a 2-mile radius of the Convention Center, Virginia Beach offers every kind of accommodation. Located at Town Center, the city's new downtown area, is the 176-room Hilton Garden Inn. In 2007, a 236-room Westin also will open at Town Center, offering high-end amenities such as the Heavenly Bed® and Westin One Call®. A \$62 million, four-diamond Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront, opened in March 2005. This premier resort features 295 rooms, panoramic ocean views, three restaurants, indoor and rooftop pools, a health club and more. A Spring Hill Suites by Marriott will open at the Virginia Beach oceanfront in 2007.

Change is in the air in Virginia Beach as the city has developed several options that will enhance the convention experience from a product development standpoint. Future planning includes hotels, restaurants and entertainment.

### **Getting Here**

Situated at the midway point on the East Coast, Virginia Beach is within a day's drive or less for over two-thirds of the nation's population and is a mere four hours from Washington, D.C. Norfolk International Airport services the entire greater region, with over 200 flights daily from most major U.S. carriers, including Southwest Airlines and Independence Air. The airport is only 18 miles, or about 20 minutes, from the oceanfront area.

### **Satisfaction Guaranteed**

Value and quality customer services are key benefits the meeting professional receives in Virginia Beach. The Virginia Beach CVB offers a full-time, award-winning professional staff ready to assist the meeting professional with all aspects of meeting and event planning.

The Virginia Beach CVB was recently honored with *Corporate & Incentive Travel* magazine's Award of Excellence, a readers' choice award that selects CVBs that best serve their meetings and/or incentive programs. With its rich blend of a premier convention center, available rooms, time-honored southern hospitality and cost-efficient value, Virginia Beach is an ideal meeting destination.

*The Virginia Beach CVB invites meeting planners to "Bring it to the Beach!" Virginia Beach is four hours southeast of Washington, D.C. by car and within a day's drive or less from two-thirds of the U.S. population. For the latest information and project updates on the new Virginia Beach Convention Center, visit [www.vbmeetings.com](http://www.vbmeetings.com). Media information and digital images are available at [www.vbpressroom.com](http://www.vbpressroom.com).*

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