

Virginia's PDCs: Saving the Commonwealth and its Localities Money through Regional Efficiencies



Virginia Association of
Planning District Commissions

Virginia's Planning District Commissions/Regional Commissions

Bringing diverse resources together at the regional level in partnership with local, state and federal entities to strengthen regions and the Commonwealth.

Virginia's 21 planning district commissions/regional commissions (PDCs/RCs) exist to foster intergovernmental cooperation by bringing together local elected and appointed officials and involved citizens to provide regional solutions to community and state issues.



The Virginia General Assembly created the statutory framework for the creation of the PDCs/RCs in 1968 through the passage of the Virginia Area Development Act. In 1995, the General Assembly modified this legislation by adopting the Regional Cooperation Act; which clearly articulates that PDCs/RCs were created to provide a forum for state and local government to address issues of a regional nature.

PDCs/RCs also encourage and facilitate local government cooperation in addressing, on a regional basis, problems of greater than local significance; helping local governments solve their problems by enhancing the ability to recognize and analyze regional opportunities and take account of regional influences in planning and implementing public policies and services.

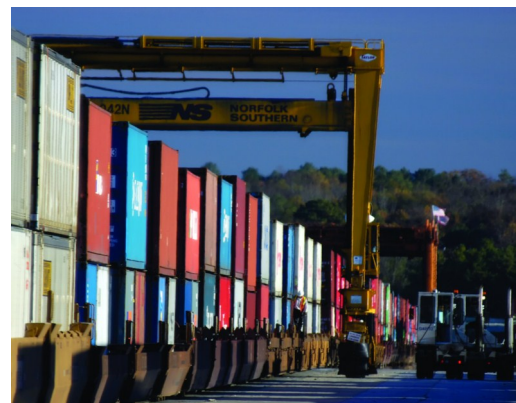
How do PDCs/RCs benefit the Commonwealth of Virginia?

- ◇ PDCs are a single comprehensive statewide network that achieve economies of scale through regional approaches
- ◇ PDCs partner with state agencies to accomplish state projects, thereby reducing the need for additional state personnel
- ◇ PDCs leverage state funds to deliver essential services in communities across the Commonwealth



What services do PDCs/RCs provide?

- ◇ Regional economic development planning, including feasibility and location studies
- ◇ Strategic planning and land use planning for each region
- ◇ Emergency preparedness and homeland security planning
- ◇ Water supply, solid waste, and other environmental resource planning, funding, and development
- ◇ Mapping and information services
- ◇ Transportation planning—Many PDCs staff Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- ◇ Administration of federal housing program funds
- ◇ Exploring regional cooperation on issues such as sustainable development and growth management
- ◇ Grant application and management for grant programs for member local governments and the PDC/RC



Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC)

Public/Private Partnership Results in New Health Clinic

The A-NPDC provided grant writing and administrative services to the Town of Tangier to build a new health center, the result of a public/private partnership between the Town of Tangier and the Tangier Island Health Foundation. The new facility replaced an outdated and deteriorated doctor's office with a state-of-the-art, 3,400 sq. ft. building and is equipped to provide treatments and procedures that could not be offered at the existing facility due to building condition and lack of space. The new center is providing added treatments as well. The funds used to develop the center included private and foundation donations to the Tangier Island Health Foundation, a Commonwealth of Virginia Challenge Grant, and a Virginia Community Development Block Grant.

Blighted Parcel Transformed into Multi-use Park

The A-NPDC provided administrative services to the Town of Chincoteague to implement a strategy to revitalize their historic commercial district along the waterfront. Acquisition of a large blighted parcel in the center of the district for development of a multi-use park was a key factor in that strategy. The Robert N. Reed Park has become the focal point of downtown and a key factor in efforts to attract tourists and residents downtown. The park has been the site of numerous festivals and provides a venue for community activities, cultural events and recreation opportunities. Funding sources included a Community Development Block Grant, a Transportation Enhancement Grant, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a Boating Infrastructure Grant, a Department of Forestry Grant, and Town funding.



Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC)

Fields of Gold – Agritourism in the Shenandoah Valley

CSPDC has developed an agritourism initiative, *Fields of Gold*, to distinguish the region as an agritourism destination. Three of Virginia's top five agriculture-producing counties are located in the Shenandoah Valley, and this initiative capitalizes on an excellent asset. In addition, two of the most popular reasons for visiting the region are its outdoor and cultural activities. By combining the agriculture and tourism industries, the region hopes to realize increased economic activity, both on and off the farm, and a marketable identity for the region. The CSPDC has helped coordinate local governments, the farming community and agritourism businesses to develop a strategic plan to promote the agriculture-based tourism in the region. This planning process includes an economic impact analysis, an asset inventory, workshops and training for farmers and entrepreneurs, and a marketing strategy for promoting the region as an agriculture destination.



Saving Lives and Protecting Property in the Shenandoah Valley

After the devastating floods of the 1990s, the CSPDC established a regional flood mitigation program where more than 100 vulnerable residential structures were elevated, acquired, or relocated removing their occupants from harm's way. From that early flood mitigation project grew a regional disaster education and emergency preparedness program to teach people about what to do before, during and after a natural disaster or emergency. The program, known as *Project Impact*, spearheaded by the CSPDC and initially funded by FEMA, has trained hundreds of ordinary citizens in emergency preparedness. By learning these basic skills, individuals can protect their families and help their neighbors and communities when emergency resources may be stretched and in short supply. This nationally recognized regional program has helped make the communities in the Shenandoah Valley safer in the event of another disaster.



Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC)

Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The CRC recently coordinated the update of the region's Hazard Mitigation Plan, having also developed the initial plan. The existing Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan was adopted by the localities of Buckingham, Charlotte Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward in 2005. As part of the update, the Amelia County Hazard Mitigation Plan was incorporated. The CRC worked with a committee of appointees from the participating localities and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to conduct the comprehensive review and update of the existing plan for the region. This regional plan will keep the localities within PD14 in compliance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. For more information visit http://virginiasheartland.org/about_pubs_hmp.html.

GIS 2011 Redistricting Assistance

The requirement to redistrict in Virginia required the process to be completed prior to the November 2011 elections, creating a tight window of time for this process to occur. To provide assistance in expediting the process for its member localities, the CRC purchased redistricting software and provided redistricting mapping services to interested localities. Once the U.S. Census Bureau released the Virginia 2010 Census data counts necessary for redistricting, eight localities requested assistance from the CRC to prepare 2011 redistricting map products. Committees were designated in each of the eight localities to begin the redistricting process. Most of the committees met at the CRC office to utilize the staff and software, but the CRC also offered a "cloud concept" allowing staff to travel offsite and have access to the data and software via the Internet. Before this technology was available, localities had to use paper maps to view the census populations released of each census block and then mathematically calculate how each would change as they manually redrew the election district lines. With GIS technology, the process has been improved to allow the users to create multiple plans to review and provide more information at a much faster pace.



of Buckingham, Charlotte Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward in 2005. As part of the update, the Amelia County Hazard Mitigation Plan was

Crater Planning District Commission (CPDC)

Commonwealth Center for Advanced Logistics Systems

CCALS

Commonwealth Center for
Advanced Logistics Systems

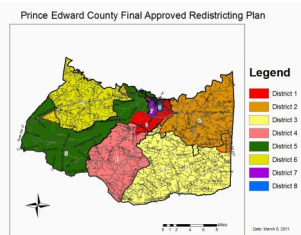
The CPDC is leading a collaboration of academic partners (Longwood University, Virginia State University, the University of Virginia and Virginia Commonwealth University), major private sector companies, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and Fort Lee to establish The Commonwealth Center for Advanced Logistics Systems (CCALS). CCALS will provide industry and government with transformational improvements in the design and analysis of logistics systems for military, commercial, consumer and emergency applications. A unique feature of CCALS is the collaborative research environment designed to accelerate the transition of technologies from creation to product implementation. CCALS research staff will work closely with its members on industry and government research projects that address critical challenges in the development of advanced logistics systems. The 2012 General Assembly provided \$1.8 million to support the CCALS operation. For additional information, visit www.ccals.com.

Love the Best PART of Virginia – Petersburg Area Regional Tourism

The CPDC created the Petersburg Area Regional Tourism (PART), a regional marketing organization established to increase visitation and tax revenue in the cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell & Petersburg, and the counties of Chesterfield, Dinwiddie & Prince George. PART is

overseen by a policy board

comprised of representatives from the travel industry, along with a representative of each of the six localities and Fort Lee. PART maintains a website, www.petersburgarea.org and advertising is geared to directing people to the website. Along with a fast-growing Facebook presence, PART distributes an annual visitor guide throughout Virginia and conducts a television advertising campaign. Prior to the establishment of Petersburg Area Regional Tourism, only two of the six participating localities had any tourism function and marketing was very limited.



LOVE
the Best *PART* of Virginia
Chesterfield County • Colonial Heights • Dinwiddie County •
Hopewell • Petersburg • Prince George County

Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission (CPPDC)

Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority

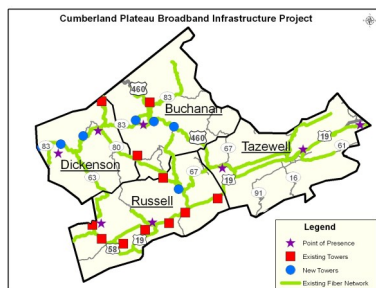
The CPPDC helped the Counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, and Russell save millions of dollars in waste disposal costs, by forming the Cumberland Plateau Regional Waste Management Authority (CPRWMA) in 1992 to meet new federal requirements for landfill closure, monitoring and operations. Three counties built transfer stations and sent their waste to a landfill in Tennessee. Through this effort these three counties have saved millions of dollars in disposal costs and have decreased their financial burden for closing and monitoring their old landfills. See www.cprwma.com for more information.



Southwest Virginia Regional Broadband Infrastructure

The CPPDC, in cooperation with Bristol Virginia Utilities Authority and the Virginia Coalfield Coalition initiated the Southwest Virginia Regional Broadband Infrastructure

Project. This 500-mile broadband network has been built with more than \$35 million in grants, most applications for which were written by PDC staff. Several IT companies, including CGI and Northrop Grumman, have located in the area creating more than 1,000 new IT jobs. The CPPDC and Lenowisco along with other public and private partners, is currently working on a \$22 million wireless initiative that will bring 4G service to the seven coalfield counties.



George Washington Regional Commission (GWRC)

Regional Land Use Scenario Planning

The Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) launched *Your Vision, Our Future: The George Washington Region Scenario Planning Study*, in 2009. The Study, a regional visioning and scenario planning process, is providing residents, business leaders, and elected officials throughout the region the opportunity to explore and debate regional growth visions, trade-offs and alternative futures.



Scenario planning was used to identify regional goals and community values, as well as explore alternatives for growth, development, and transportation investments in the region. A summary document is available to inform stakeholders about the planning process and describe the four alternative development scenarios being considered for the region. It will be a resource to stakeholder groups in the planning process as they contemplate the region's future, and select a preferred development scenario that meets community-stated initiatives to link development with quality-of-life and improve community cohesiveness and supporting infrastructure. For more information visit www.fampo.gwregion.org.

GWRide Connect

GWRide Connect is a free ridesharing service, assisting persons seeking daily transportation from Fredericksburg, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Caroline and



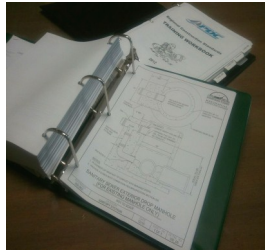
King George counties to employment locations in Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, Richmond, Dahlgren and other employment sites in the Fredericksburg area.

The program promotes ridesharing and transportation demand management techniques with a mission to promote, plan and establish transportation choices of the single occupant vehicle. In addition, by saving highway miles the commuting participants are aiding in reducing the effects on the environment and saving valuable energy resources. Further information may be viewed at www.GWConnect.org.

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)

Regional Construction Standards

The HRPDC recently published *Regional Construction Standards, Fifth Edition*, a reference manual of uniform construction standards for improvements in public rights-of-way, supported by the localities, regional agencies and private industry. The manual is intended to accommodate most typical construction projects and the majority of issues faced by communities in building minor roadways, drainage facilities, wastewater collection and water distribution systems. The manual includes bidding and contractual provisions, technical specifications and standard design details as well as standard forms. The standards contained in the manual are supported by an ongoing technical review process, regular updates when needed, ongoing training and a recently developed field manual. Available electronically at www.hrregconstds.org or www.hrpdcva.gov or in hard copy, the manual has been used on hundreds of projects ranging in construction value from under \$40,000 to more than \$20 million.



Regional Debris Management

In 1999, the Regional Emergency Management Technical Advisory Committee (REMTAC) saw the need for better regional coordination of debris management. Following the impact of Hurricanes Floyd and Dennis, and guided by the lessons learned during a community exercise, the REMTAC Debris Management Subcommittee was formed to develop a "Regional Debris Management Planning Model." Pre-positioned contracts were developed to enhance regional debris removal, reduction & disposal. The Subcommittee now meets on an as-needed basis for contract revisions and/or after-



action reports based on events. HRPDC continues to facilitate contract revisions with key stakeholders. Regional contracts ensure that the region's localities and VDOT have equal access

to contract assistance. Detailed information on this initiative can be found at www.hrpdcva.gov.

Lenowisco Planning District Commission (LPDC)

Powell River Trail Project – Big Stone Gap & Appalachia, VA

The LPDC is spearheading the Powell River Trail Project, a regional effort to convert a 2 mile abandoned railroad corridor to a public use recreational trail area. The project is a collaborative effort between the two towns, Wise County and the LPDC and runs through the scenic Powell River Gorge area between the Towns of Big Stone Gap and Appalachia. Not only is the trail corridor incredibly beautiful and likely to draw some tourism, it will also serve as a means of pedestrian transportation between the two towns where currently no such alternative is available. Upon completion, the Powell River Trail will provide access to the Powell River for fishing and possibly whitewater rafting opportunities. Future plans call for the trail to connect with the Big Stone Gap Greenbelt, a recreational trail currently around the Town of Big Stone Gap. The project is approximately 35 percent funded through the Virginia Department of Transportation Enhancement Grant Program.

Wise County Inn – Wise, VA

The Wise County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) has begun the restoration and redevelopment of the Wise Inn, situated adjacent to the county courthouse in Wise. Several private efforts to restore the property met with no success and the Inn, listed on both state and national historic registers, has long stood vacant. Its deteriorated state has been an impediment to revitalization efforts undertaken in downtown Wise. The IDA intends to return the structure to productive use as a regional economic development asset – a moderate-to-upscale hotel, restaurant and meeting facility to support regional tourism, education, and economic development efforts. Renovation of the historic structure and construction of a new addition will result in 50 guest rooms, a restaurant, and 3,000 square feet of conference and meeting space, and will create 30-40 full time jobs directly attributed to the Inn's various operations.

Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC)

Middle Peninsula Shallow Water Dredging and Regional Sediment Management Plan

Federal funds are insufficient to sustain maintenance dredging of the 17 federal navigation channels located in the Middle Peninsula, but the MPPDC and the Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority recognize that federal navigation channels still need to be maintained into the future. Quantified cost savings are realized by functionally consolidating dredging projects within close geographic distances as well as using beneficial dredge material for beach nourishment projects within the same geographic distance. Savings are realized by reducing mobilization and demobilization costs and coordinating dredging and sediment management projects on a consistent time table. Report can be found at www.virginiacoastalaccess.net/.



Conservation Easements: Fiscal Impacts to Localities in the Middle Peninsula

MPPDC staff helped the region's commissioners of revenue to change their reporting policies for land valuation approaches to conservation easements, particularly as it relates to Virginia Tax Code requirements. Taking into consideration the differences between those counties that have adopted "land use assessment" and those localities that have not, MPPDC staff found that each county could improve current



approaches in handling and valuing conservation easements within their county that could provide fiscal benefits through the Composite Index, and therefore increase State

aid received for education. Through the accounting of all conservation easements and the consistent devaluing of the conservation easements within their jurisdiction, each county has an opportunity to improve current practices. Based on this work the region's commissioners of revenue have changed their reporting policies.

Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC)

Washington County Disaster Recovery Project

The MRPDC partnered with Washington County to implement an Urgent Need Community Development Block Grant to assist families affected by the tornado events of April 2011. This project identified 11 families who were either uninsured, or under-insured at the time of the storms, and will serve to either rehabilitate or reconstruct safe, affordable housing for each of the families. MRPDC staff will serve in the role of project manager, drafting all program designs; facilitating meetings of the Project Management Team and the Housing Rehab Board; consulting with the Rehab Specialist to initiate, monitor, and finalize all construction projects; and be responsible for all reporting and communication with the Department of Housing and Community Development.

School of Appalachian Music and Arts

The MRPDC partnered with the Town of Marion and Appalachian Heritage Schools, Inc. to renovate and restore the turn-of-the-century (c. 1908) four-story school building in Historic Downtown Marion and turn it into a major tourism, music/arts education, and cultural heritage



attraction, known as the Wayne C. Henderson School of Appalachian Music and Arts. The first phase of this project, which included streetscape improvements and the revitalization of the school building exterior facades, was funded through a \$1,000,000 grant from the Department of Housing and Community Development. The second phase, which is on-going, is funded by several sources, including the Virginia Industrial Revitalization Fund. Overall, the project will be an economic development engine that synergizes and supports other related efforts in the region, while providing its own unique education offerings.

New River Valley Planning District Commission (NRVPCD)

Public Engagement through the New River Valley Livability Initiative

The NRVPCD created a planning board game called *Built NRV* to help identify community values and work through issues in a collaborative environment.



The game is helping to inform the community about the three year sustainable communities planning program called the *New River*

Valley Livability Initiative. The game was created in cooperation with Virginia Tech Department of Performing Arts and Sojourn Theater Company. For more information visit www.nrvlivability.org

Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative (TEMCI)

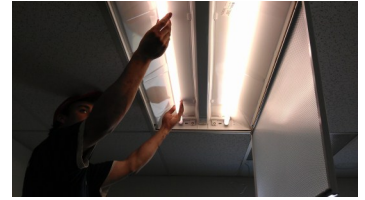
This three-PDC (NRVPCD, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany RC and Mount Rogers PDC) collaboration focused on advanced manufacturing technical assistance. The PDCs worked with the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development to pair university faculty with a manufacturing firm in the multi-PDC region to assist companies in developing a new product, improving their processes or implementing energy efficient technologies. The program is funded by the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration-Trade Adjustment Assistance program with match funding provided by Volvo Trucks North America.



Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC)

Energy Efficiency Weatherization Retrofit

The NNPDC established a revolving loan fund to allow homeowners to borrow money at low interest rates to implement energy-saving measures in their homes. To show homeowners the



potential savings from such weatherization efforts, the NNPDC conducted an energy audit that resulted in retrofit work in three public buildings. That work became a demonstration project that continues to show—month to month—the savings in electricity by comparing “before” and “after” electricity bills. The weatherization work included insulation, lighting, and HVAC equipment. Details about the demonstration project, and the significant savings it is generating, can be found at: <http://www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/ENERGY-EFFICIENCY/energy-efficiency.htm>.

Assign-a-Highway Program

Four counties participate in this regional program that assigns non-violent probationers to pick up litter on various state-maintained



Northern Neck roads, allowing probationers to fulfill their community service obligations. Since January of 2009, the program has been responsible for the removal of 552 tons of litter from public roads in the region, at a cost savings to the counties

of \$186,073. More at: <http://www.nnpdc.org/PAGES/ASSIGN-A-HIGHWAY/assign-a-highway.htm>.

Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC)

Regional Tire Operations Program (RTOP)

The NSVRC, with assistance from the Regional Solid Waste Management Technical Committee, administers the Regional Tire Operations Program (RTOP). RTOP is a self-sustaining enterprise program that processes tires and reduces landfill waste with a tire shredder owned by NSVRC, located at and operated by staff at the Clarke-Frederick-Winchester regional Landfill. NSVRC initiated RTOP through SWMTC and a grant from Department of Environmental Quality to purchase the equipment. Revenue generated from the program supports the ongoing maintenance and operation of the equipment. The equipment is mobile and is transferred to various localities - within and outside the region - to process tire shredding, thereby reducing waste entered into the landfill.



Regional Housing and Community Services Planning Process

NSVRC staffs the regional Housing and Community Services Planning Process including a Policy Board and Technical Advisory Network. Established in 2010, the Policy Board is a subcommittee of the NSVRC, with membership composed of citizens, elected officials, locality staff members and housing industry professionals. While there is not a single jurisdiction eligible to receive federal funding for housing/community development individually, through the coordinated regional process, the localities have been able to access more than \$3.4 million since 2008 to promote the development and sustainability of safe decent affordable housing for low and moderate income households of the Northern Shenandoah Valley. The NSVRC staff provides a wide range of technical assistance and project management to localities at the direction of the regional prioritization process coordinated through the HCSPB. To learn more visit www.NSVcommunity.org.

Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)

Regional Energy Strategy and International Learning

NVRC is implementing a Northern Virginia Regional Energy Strategy to respond to the challenge of supplying reliable, cost-effective energy supplies to support a growing and prosperous economy. The Strategy aligns the region's multiple local energy planning efforts achieving greater energy efficiency, energy security, and the region's ability to adapt to climate change. Work includes coordinating regional actions to implement energy efficiency improvements; completing energy use and greenhouse gas inventories for the region's localities; undertaking energy assurance planning; and identifying work needed to support energy and environmental sustainability. Goals are met through public-private partnerships to deliver on-the-ground service such as the residential Home Performance with ENERGY STAR; commercial building energy efficiency; and community energy/combined heat and power programs.



Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

The 2005 BRAC had a greater impact on Northern Virginia than any other region in the country, impacting more than 22,000 workers. In response, NVRC led a collaborative process with the Commonwealth of Virginia, the US Department of Defense, Chambers of Commerce, and local governments to assist in creating regional solutions for Northern Virginia. This initiative unites elected officials, chief administrative officers, technical subject matter experts and military leaders in addressing the BRAC challenges. The most significant issue has been traffic, a major consequence of the 2005 BRAC, worsening an already well-documented congested transportation network. NVRC is focusing on real results that can serve the military's and public's interest using regional solutions including the Real-time Ridesharing Pilot Project; the exploration of a commuter ferry on the Potomac River; teleworking strategies; and public bus transit from metro rail directly to BRAC locations.

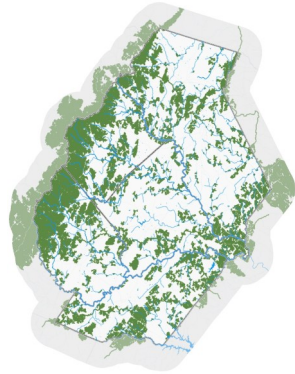


Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC)

Regional Green Infrastructure Mapping Initiative

The RRRC has completed the first phase of its regional green infrastructure mapping initiative, with work on phase two to begin soon. By identifying green infrastructure assets, communities can assist decision-makers in making more informed land-use and

development decisions. The effort has resulted in the development of a GIS base map that builds upon the ecological model of the Virginia Conservation Lands Needs Assessment (VCLNA), and identifies, prioritizes and links natural habitats in the region. The second phase of the mapping

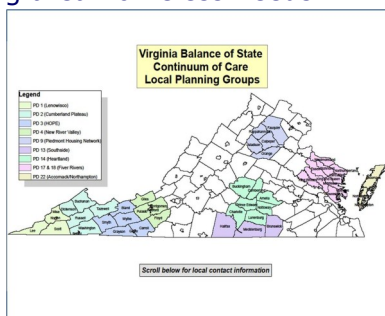


effort will focus on updating and fine-tuning two other VCLNA GIS data layers for the region: forest economics and cultural assets. For more information, visit <http://www.rrregion.org/greeninfrastructure.html>.

Foothills Housing Network (FHN) and Rapid Re-Housing Program

RRRC and the Foothills Housing Network (FHN) have been working to offset a recent nationwide reduction in homeless shelter funding, and the loss of more than one-third of emergency shelter beds over the past year. Following the RRRC's forum on Homelessness and Affordable Housing, the representatives of the regional FHN have been working to establish a coordinated approach to addressing area homeless needs.

Two grants have made it possible to begin implementation of a collaborative region-wide prevention and rapid re-housing program enabling the placement of homeless or at-risk homeless families and individuals in permanent rental housing without requiring long shelter stays.



Region 2000 Local Government Council (LGC)

Regional Public Safety Radio Communications

The counties of Bedford and Amherst along with the cities of Bedford and Lynchburg, commissioned the LGC to own and manage a \$12 million regional radio system serving more than 3,000 public safety and local government users.

Utilizing authority under the Regional Cooperation Act, the LGC borrowed funding and executed a contract with Harris Corporation to put new microwave, repeaters and switching equipment on 14 towers and 911 dispatching equipment in three dispatch centers under the management of the Region 2000 Radio Communications Board, established as a committee of the LGC. In addition to the four political jurisdictions, the system will also serve the Blue Ridge Regional Jail, the Region 2000 Services Authority, and the Greater Lynchburg Transit Corporation; covering 1,200 square miles and allow complete interoperability between sheriff's deputies, as well as police, fire and emergency medical personnel anywhere within the four jurisdictions.



Regional Solid Waste Disposal Services

The LGC staff provides operations and financial management services to operate a five-jurisdiction regional landfill receiving 230,000 tons of solid waste per year. It's an \$8 million operation under contract with the Region 2000 Services Authority serving Campbell, Lynchburg,

City of Bedford, Appomattox and Nelson Counties. Utilizing the LGC staff for all operations, the Authority has closed two bond borrowings which have developed



DEQ-approved landfill cells in Lynchburg and Campbell County. The operations have saved or cost avoided \$8.3 million over 4 years for the participating jurisdictions in travel and operations costs. LGC staff also provides recycling education programs, annual recycling reports and household hazardous material recycling.

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC)

Regional Emergency Management Planning Program

The RRPDC houses a regional emergency management planning program, which provides planning support to the region's jurisdictions. The primary purpose of this program is to provide technical assistance to the region's jurisdictions and coordinate emergency management planning efforts on a regional basis. The region's emergency management coordinators have identified this as a very valuable RRPDC program which provides needed service, promotes efficiencies and reduces costs for the region's jurisdictions.

One example of a successful effort delivered through this program is the Disaster Survivor Day. Over 2,000 regional residents have participated in preparedness training sessions at locations across the Region. Subject matter experts from a variety of disciplines provide this training to improve the ability of residents to respond to disaster situations.



Port of Richmond

Working with the Richmond Area MPO, RRPDC staff has actively coordinated efforts related to revitalizing the Port of Richmond, including oversight of the I-64 Express/James River Barge



Project which received startup funding from the MPO. The Virginia Port Authority views RRPDC staff as a key resource and advisor related

to the Port of Richmond. The RRPDC has also worked with the City of Richmond and surrounding counties to explore ways to promote the Port of Richmond as an economic development resource.

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)

Broadband/Fiber Infrastructure Study

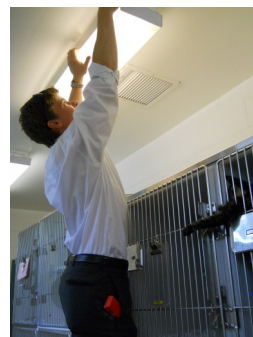
The RVARC conducted a study on Broadband/Fiber Infrastructure for the Roanoke Valley. This unique project demonstrated the complete collaboration of local government and the private sector. Recognizing the importance of broadband infrastructure, the study was



commissioned by the City of Roanoke, the City of Salem, Botetourt County and Roanoke County, with the support of eleven private companies and individuals. This pooling of resources allowed the Roanoke Valley to complete a study that otherwise would not have been completed by a single entity or sector. The RVARC facilitated the initial process to ensure the Roanoke region develops needed infrastructure. The local governments and private sector partners formed a task force to review the research and recommendations and provide a plan for implementation. The complete study can be found online at www.highspeedroanoke.com.

Volunteers for Energy

The RVARC conducted an energy auditing program called Volunteers for Energy (VfE), engaging engineers, architects, building specialists, and other professionals to perform base level energy audits on non-residential customers to assist in reducing energy costs. Clients covered a wide range of building types, including restaurants, churches, industrial sites, and non-profits. Each client received a detailed energy audit report that ranked energy saving opportunities, from equipment retrofits and replacements to behavior change campaigns. The VfE process includes a tracking element where



individual recommendations per business are audited at 6-month, 12-month, and then annual intervals to determine which, if any, of the recommended strategies have been completed. Success is measured by the total kilowatt hours of recommended savings and the percentage

implementation of individual strategies. More information can be found at www.rvarc.org/energy.

Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC)

Tobacco Heritage Trail Project

Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC) works with the *Roanoke River Rails to Trails* to develop the *Tobacco Heritage Trail*, which, when fully completed, will provide 150 miles of rail-trail, plus connecting corridors, in Brunswick, Mecklenburg, Halifax, Lunenburg and Charlotte Counties. The SPDC has been instrumental in obtaining over \$10 million in funding for the construction of the trail and provides office space for the Trail Coordinator, a part-time position funded through Virginia Tourism. It is estimated



that the trail when fully completed could attract more than 197,000 visits annually with direct spending of \$3.5 million in the region.

Construction of the entire trail is estimated to inject \$15.6 million in the regional economy and create 178 jobs during the construction period. For more information visit www.tobaccoheritagetrail.org.

Route 92 Waterline Extension Project in Mecklenburg County

The SPDC was instrumental in obtaining the funding necessary to construct the 54,483 linear foot waterline and pumping facilities to Mecklenburg County residents in and around the Town of Chase City through the Roanoke River Service Authority, which eliminated the need for the Town to construct a plant that would cost far more than the expense to extend the water line from the regional system. The Town was previously served by deep-water wells all drilled prior to 1945



which had become unreliable. Additionally, a ground water storage facility was constructed at the pump station site to provide the necessary water infrastructure for Microsoft resulting in a \$499 million investment with plans to invest another \$150 million to expand its latest generation data center in Mecklenburg County.

Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC)

Fluvanna County Water System Return on Investment Study

At the request of the Fluvanna County Board of Supervisors the TJPDC conducted a *Return on Investment Study for a Water System Extension in the Zion's Crossroads* area of Fluvanna County, to determine if the county could expect to receive net revenue from the proposed water system extension. TJPDC reviewed development trends at rural interchanges on I-64 between Short Pump and Charlottesville showing the differences in growth patterns at interchanges with water infrastructure compared with those without. In addition, TJPDC analyzed the costs and revenues Fluvanna County receives from development, which showed that the county is currently losing over \$400,000 in the Zion's Crossroads area due to expenses in excess of revenue. From this study, TJPDC developed a cost/revenue model allowing county staff, elected officials and the public to analyze the fiscal impact of different development scenarios. The market study and model showed that extending the water system would change the type of development taking place resulting in net revenue for Fluvanna County of at least \$10 million over the course of 10 years.

Cville Bike mApp Smartphone Tool

Both Charlottesville and Albemarle County support bicycle use to reduce traffic and improve community health, but there was no data available to identify the best places in which to invest scarce funding for bicycle improvements. The TJPDC, working with volunteers, created the *Cville Bike mApp Smartphone Tool*. The *Cville Bike mApp* is an application for certain smartphones that enables bicyclists to collect data showing the path of their bike rides as well as the purpose, speed and time of day. This data is collected by the application using the GPS function built into the phones. The application is turned on and off by the rider and when shut down their data is anonymously uploaded to the TJPDC server. The uploaded data is then analyzed to determine the routes that cyclists are using more frequently and the areas where improvements will provide the greatest benefit.

West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC)

Philpott Marina Market Study

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) has been commissioned to conduct a market study for Henry County regarding a proposed marina on Philpott Lake. The study is to assess the demand for the proposed marina, to be owned and operated by Henry County. The proposed marina would consist of 40 boat slips, with an option for an additional 20, to be rented out on an annual basis. Included in the facility proposal is the provision of an adjacent group campground, currently operated by the Army Corps of Engineers.



Sidewalk Inventories

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (WPPDC) conducted a series of sidewalk inventories which began in the spring of 2011 and were requested by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The goal of these efforts is to have these inventories included in local comprehensive plans; long-range transportation plans, as well as the WPPDC Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan updates. Conducting inventories of sidewalks included



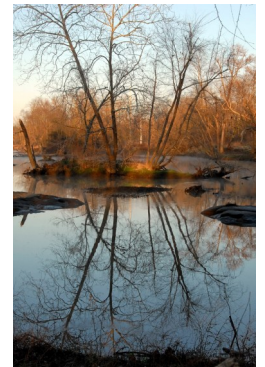
measuring the width of the sidewalk segment; noting the absence of pedestrian curb cuts; noting obstructions in sidewalk segments, including utility

poles, shrubs, etc.; and taking note of pedestrian circulation issues such as lack of crosswalks at busy intersections, or wide streets which may pose safety hazards to pedestrians.

Multi-PDC Projects

Regional Water Supply Planning

Most PDCs are involved in one way or another to accommodate the state mandate (9 VAC 250780) of preparing local and regional water supply plans. The regulation requires all localities to develop water supply plans and drought contingency plans and submit to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The plans are reviewed every five years to assess adequacy. Significant changes will require an amended plan and review by the Board. This regulation protects the health, safety, and welfare of citizens by requiring local and regional water supply planning; with a goal of establishing a basic set of criteria that each local or regional water supply plan must contain, so that they may plan for, and provide adequate water to their citizens in a manner that balances the need for environmental protection and future growth. By joining together PDCs assist in creating regional plans, providing a cost savings for localities and the Commonwealth.



Regional Hazard Mitigation Planning

The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that local governments develop and adopt all-hazard mitigation plans and update those plans every five years in order to receive certain FEMA grants funds administered through the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM). The purpose of the plan is to identify natural hazards that impact the region and to offer mitigation strategies that will lessen the effect that hazards have on citizens' property and businesses in the Region. The most important part of the plan is the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) which provides a detailed assessment of potential hazards that could affect the region and its localities as well as their potential impacts. The mitigation strategy portion of the plan outlines the actions needed to reduce the impacts identified in the HIRA. Implementation of the projects listed in the plan is crucial to the success of mitigation efforts in the region.

Virginia's Planning District Commissions/Regional Commissions

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