

and towers

From fields...

The Region is...



My Backyard

The newsletter of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, including the Town of Ashland, the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan and the City of Richmond.

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MEET THE RICHMOND REGIONAL PDC OFFICERS FOR FY 03

Fall/Winter 2002

John E. Gordon, Jr., **Treasurer**

Angela A. LaCombe, **Vice Chairman**

Roy J. Harrison, Jr., **Secretary**

Rebecca M. Ringley, **Chairman**

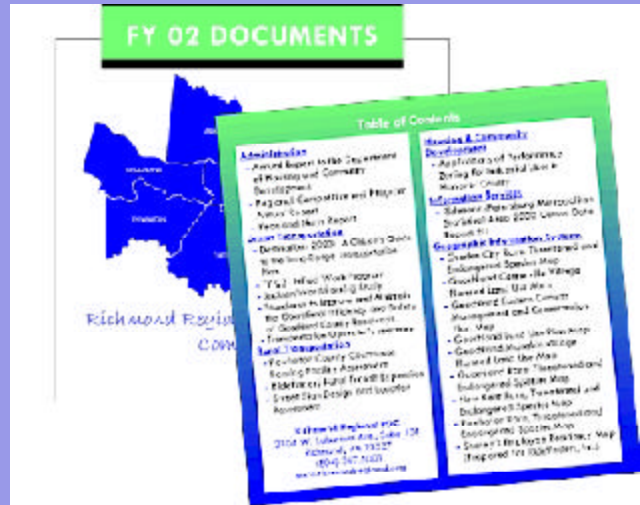
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What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

FY 02 Documents Available on CD

The Richmond Regional PDC staff has provided another value-added service to our member jurisdictions by creating a CD comprised of all reports and documents produced by the Commission in FY 02.

Twenty-two reports and documents are included on the CD, including *Destinations 2023: A Citizen's Guide to the Long-Range Transportation Plan* and the *Richmond-Petersburg Metropolitan Statistical Area 2000 Census Data Report #1*. Copies will be distributed to PDC Board members at upcoming meetings. Please contact Patricia Villa at 367-6001 or by e-mail at pvilla@richmondregional.org for additional copies.



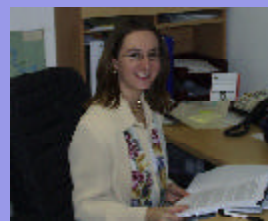
of Emergency Management to identify grant funding opportunities to the region made available through the U.S. Department of Justice. PDC staff anticipates a competitive grant application process will begin by the end of the year. The RERTAC plans to use this funding opportunity to request financial assistance to support regional interoperability planning efforts.

For additional information on the enhancements, contact Jacqueline Stewart at the Richmond Regional PDC (367-6001) or by e-mail at jstewart@richmondregional.org

Emergency Radio Systems Demonstration

On September 24, 2002, members of the Regional Emergency Response Technical Advisory Committee (RERTAC) met with Master Sergeant Dennis Goodwin of the 34th Civil Support Team to observe a demonstration of emergency radio interoperability capabilities. The members of the RERTAC have been working together to identify needed enhancements to the region's existing emergency radio systems and to develop specific recommendations.

Richmond Regional PDC staff provides support to the committee and has been working with the Virginia Department



Congratulations to Christine H. Fix (formerly Christine D. Holt) who was recently certified as a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). A staff member at the Richmond Regional PDC since 1999, her American Institute of Certified Planners certification ensures that she has met the highest standards in the planning profession.

The parking deck across from the Carpenter Center is closed. For a detailed map identifying parking garages/lots when attending events, access <http://www.carpentercenter.org/parking.html>.

From fields and towers....The Region is My Backyard

What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

Government



On our Radar Screen

HB 1299 Nonconforming use; manufactured housing – introduced during the 2002 General Assembly session, this bill would have provided, under certain circumstances, that certain manufactured homes be deemed the same as site-built homes for purposes of zoning regulatory standards. The bill was carried over and the Virginia Housing Study Commission is evaluating the legislation for the 2003 session.

This impending legislation has been discussed at Virginia Municipal League and at Virginia Association of Counties meetings at length, with the conclusion being that in order to defeat it, strong opposition from localities, particularly the citizens, will be required. At its September 12, 2002 meeting, the Richmond Regional PDC unanimously passed a resolution opposing potential legislation to grant by-right placement for manufactured housing in any residentially zoned district. This resolution has been communicated to the Capital region legislators.

In many areas, manufactured homes are a viable solution to affordable housing. However, legislation of this magnitude would force localities to treat manufactured homes the same as single-family homes in all residential zoning districts.

Obvious concerns include the fact that the bill makes no mention of exclusion for historic districts or other overlay districts. Design standards in a historic district may help prevent being forced to allow manufactured housing in the districts. On the other hand, those design standards may not be an obstruction.

Legislative Dates to Remember

- December 20, 2002** - Governor Warner proposes budget amendments
- January 8, 2003** - General Assembly convenes
- January 23, 2003** - Legislative Day
- February 22, 2003** - Sine Die

Forcing localities to treat manufactured homes the same as single-family homes insofar as being allowable in residential zoning districts:

- Usurps and erodes local land use authority. Zoning is intended to be a local land use control, intended to be applied in the best interests of citizens in that jurisdiction, with the local elected body the best judge of citizens' needs.
- Leaves homeowners without a voice in land use decisions.
- Requires counties, cities and towns to equate doublewide manufactured homes with custom-built single-family homes.
- Undermines an open, public process by which local governments consider citizens' concerns and balance those concerns in the local planning process.

(Continued on Page 8.)

Look For ...

Legislative updates on the Richmond Regional PDC web site this coming General Assembly Session

Information is only a click away!



During this year's General Assembly session, the RRPDC web site will post scheduled updates, alerts and meetings of interest to localities and to our publics. To access this feature, go to www.richmondregional.org and click on the legislative button.

TRIVIA Question 1: What five theatrical entities comprise the Virginia Performing Arts Foundation? (Answer on page 7.)

What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

Technical Assistance

The Richmond Regional PDC provides rural transportation planning services to the non-urban portions of Charles City, Goochland, New Kent and Powhatan counties through a program primarily funded by an annual grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation. Support includes locality-specific technical assistance in the form of project development, research, grant writing and technical planning documents.

Powhatan Courthouse Parking Assessment

In Powhatan County, east of the historic Powhatan County Courthouse sits an unmarked gravel parking lot not fully utilized by residents or visitors. Drivers often park along the two adjacent roadways (Marion Harland Lane and Old Buckingham Road) creating problems for oncoming drivers at the nearby intersection and parallel parking on both sides of

Marion Harland Lane creates a narrow passage, reducing traffic to one lane. The objective—How to get visitors to park in the designated lot, while keeping the parking lot visible yet unintrusive to the historic area—was envisioned as a well

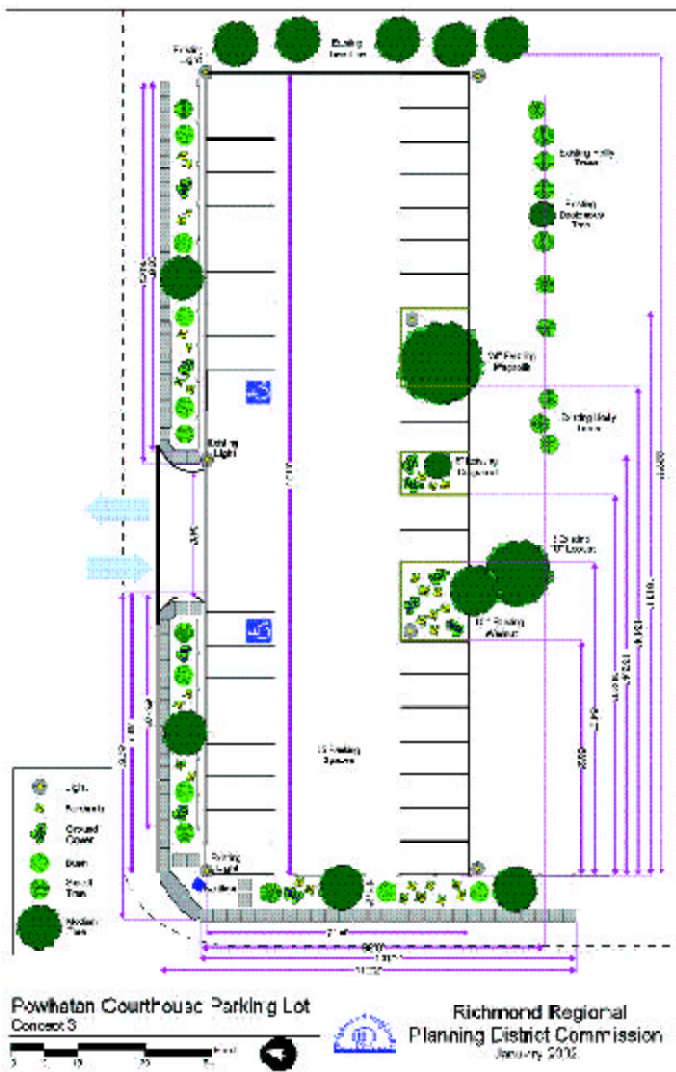
(Continued on page 8.)

Regional Competitiveness Funding—Update

An article in the previous newsletter reported that funding for the Regional Competitiveness Program had been eliminated, with the exception of \$2 million each year which would be made available for *workforce services programs*. Also reported was that because of uncertainties about further state budget cuts, the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) had delayed establishing program guidelines and application procedures. Since then, Governor Warner has reduced workforce services funding further for the current and next fiscal years: \$400,000 will be cut in FY 03 and \$500,000 will be cut in FY 04. Revised amounts available for workforce services grants (statewide) are: \$1.6 million in FY 03 and \$1.5 million in FY 04, with the maximum grant allocation to any one partnership being \$400,000 over two years. Contracts with the partnerships will include language that allows the state to reduce grant amounts in the event of future budget cuts.

Shortly after the governor's funding decisions were released, DHCD announced a compressed program timetable and grant application process (compressed in order to have final decisions made and first checks out before the General Assembly convenes). December 13, 2002 is the grant application deadline to DHCD.

In addition, the Richmond Partnership will need to requalify for program funding next year. The application deadline for this is May 31, 2003, and the region's legislative liaisons will coordinate that effort.



TRIVIA Question 2: A recent Richmond Times-Dispatch article highlighted a contest where RRPDC intern, Anthony Greulich, named which new ship owned by the shipping company, "K" Line America, headquartered in Richmond. (Answer on page 7.)

What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

James River Interpretive Map

The James River Advisory Council is marketing the James River as a dynamic and interesting place to see, visit and experience by creating an interpretive map. Richmond Regional PDC staff was asked to assist in developing the map, which locates and narrates associated environmental, historical, cultural resources and reference landmarks to benefit river users. The goal of the map is to give people a sense of ownership of the river and to encourage both its active and passive use as a recreational resource and as an educational tool.

With the help of City of Richmond James River Park System staff and members of the James River Advisory Council, PDC staff collected data on recreational, cultural and historical sites

along the James River from Goochland County to the Charles City County/James City County line. The map was funded through a grant from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Coastal Program through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

With the influence the James has had on settlement patterns and the abundance of flora and fauna within and surrounding its waters, the James River proves to be a regional natural and historic treasure.

A large version of this map is posted on the Richmond Regional PDC web site. For additional information, contact Christine Fix at 367-6001 or via e-mail at cfix@richmondregional.org.

To view James River Interpretive Map, click [HERE](#).

What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

The Richmond Area's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

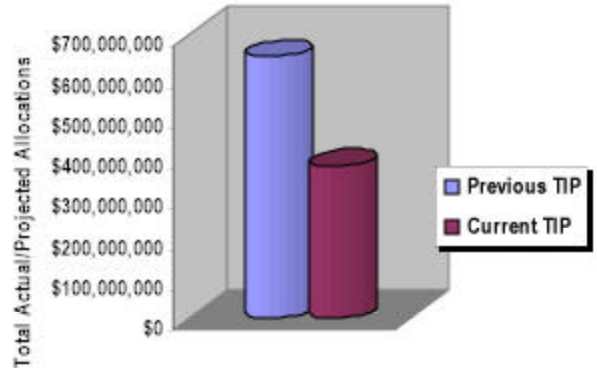
On September 12, 2002, the Richmond Area MPO adopted its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 03-05. The TIP is a three-year program of projects for which federal and state funds have been allocated or are projected for allocation. Since it is a multi-modal program, it includes highway, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian and freight-related projects.

RRPDC staff employed a wide array of activities aimed at soliciting public input during two public review periods in July and August prior to the adoption of the TIP. These efforts included conducting nine public information meetings where the draft TIP and information relating to the document's development were made available. The draft TIP and its related air quality conformity analysis were made available for public review by way of distribution to Ridefinders and 14 libraries located throughout the region. Advertisements were placed in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* and *Richmond Free Press* and on the RRPDC web site. Additionally, a mass mailing was conducted to distribute notification of the public review periods. Approximately 800 mailings were sent to committees, churches, organizations and individuals, while e-mail distribution was utilized for special interest groups.

This year, the adoption of the TIP took on a heightened level of importance. Because the TIP is based primarily on the projects from the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Virginia Transportation Six-Year Program, the massive cuts applied to the current Six-Year Program translated to a significant reduction in funding for transportation projects in the Richmond area and across the state. The cuts are the result of the recent economic downturn and problems dealing with low cost estimates, unachievable scheduling and other difficulties arising from the previous Six-Year Program.

In response to these difficulties, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has instituted policy goals to develop a "realistic" transportation program. The goals include: 1.) using realistic revenue forecasts and cost estimates 2.) paying off projects in their year of completion 3.) removing projects that have no foreseeable source of funding. The current Six-Year Program's overall funding level of \$7.2 billion for FY

Comparing TIPs



02-08 represents a 29 percent reduction in overall funding from the previous FY 01-07 Six-Year Program. The funding reduction led to the removal of approximately 179 transportation projects across the state. Locally, the Richmond Area MPO experienced a 42 percent decrease in actual and projected funding, or approximately \$270 million, for the three-year period covered by the recently adopted TIP.

Despite the concerns that arose from the state's transportation funding problems and the tightly defined schedule established by VDOT for the development of the current TIP, staff from both the RRPDC and the MPO's member jurisdictions and agencies were able to adopt the FY 02/03-04/05 Transportation Improvement Program on schedule.



Farewell to Daniel E. Rudge who will be leaving the RRPDC this month. Dan has accepted the position of Metropolitan Planning Organization Director for the Springfield, Missouri metropolitan area. His new responsibilities will include serving as lead planner for transportation initiatives in the region as well as administrative and personnel duties. Dan joined the RRPDC staff in September 1999. He served as lead planner for the most recent Long-Range Transportation Plan update, the Citizen's Guide to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, access management ordinance development and technical assistance to local jurisdictions. He was also project manager for the Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC).

TRIVIA Question 3: The Richmond Area MPO boundary expanded recently . Which jurisdiction did it involve?

Getting There...

Transportation Enhancements—Update

Established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, the Transportation Enhancement Program is the federal program that provides funding for sidewalks, bike lanes and the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors into trails. It also allows for visual and aesthetic improvements for overall quality of life benefits. Communities and civic organizations use the program to acquire, restore and preserve eligible historic buildings and sites; renovate streetscapes; and provide transportation museums and visitor centers.

Since its inception, this program has been very popular with local governments and a wide variety of groups with interests in community and environmental preservation, outdoor recreation and alternatives to the automobile.

In a presentation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), the Virginia Department of Transportation's Chief Financial Officer outlined the current status of the Transportation Enhancement Program and presented a



proposed policy that the department would like to utilize for the administration of the program.

VDOT would like to apply the same policy goals to the Transportation Enhancement Program that were recently utilized in the development of the FY 03 Six-Year Program. The policy goals that are applicable to the enhancement program are: Use realistic revenue projections and cost estimates, pay off projects

in year of completion, bring projects to an acceptable stage of completion and support rail and public transportation.

These policy goals were recently utilized by VDOT to review enhancement program projects. The review identified \$29 million in funding that would be needed to bring approved enhancement projects to a reasonable stage of completion. VDOT additionally identified that federal revenue forecasts call for a reduction in annual Transportation Enhancement Program funding from \$18.5 million to \$15 million.

Recently, the CTB completed its review of the Transportation Enhancement Program and has decided to follow VDOT's initial recommendations, bringing the ongoing enhancement projects across the state to a reasonable point of completion before any new projects are approved. As a result, VDOT has recently stated that in 2003, all enhancement program funds will be used to complete existing projects and new project applications will not be accepted for the upcoming year's funding.

For additional information on transportation enhancement funding, contact Lawrence Hagin at the RRPDC at 367-6001 or by e-mail at lhagin@richmondregional.org

News on Main Street Station

- ✕ The restoration effort of Main Street Station is well underway.
- ✕ The track passenger platform is almost completed.
- ✕ The walls of the mechanical plant on the westside of the headhouse have been built with the stone and equipment to follow.
- ✕ On the interior, additional HVAC is being completed along with wood restoration and wall/ceiling plastering.

Next on the list:

- ✕ Walls and ceilings will be painted using historic colors and wood work will be finished.
- ✕ Terra cotta will be installed on the exterior.
- ✕ The eastside parking lot will be constructed.

What's Happening...

(Continued from page 3.)

HB 1212 Nonconforming use

- Violates property rights of citizens.
- Reduces the ability of localities to maintain the character of their communities.
- Is detrimental to the overall quality of neighborhoods because of co-locating dissimilar structures.
- Breaches public trust in government by interference of the General Assembly, seizing local government authority.
- Offers the cookie-cutter approach which will not work in all communities. Many localities seek to preserve similar and traditional neighborhoods or residential communities to keep property values consistent, stable and to maintain aesthetic features.

For information on this and other legislative issues, contact Patricia Villa at the Richmond Regional PDC or by e-mail at pvilla@richmondregional.org.

Powhatan Courthouse Parking Assessment

designed lot, increasing functionality while promoting aesthetic qualities seen in the Courthouse village. RRPDC planning staff assumed the task of developing the assessment in the form of a report, technical enough for the county to hand to an engineer and begin the site planning, yet reader friendly to present to county citizens.

The report assessed current conditions and made recommendations to improve the site, including the design of a parking facility that would be built in keeping with the community character of the courthouse area and the county's historic village square study. Design treatment included items such as historic lighting, landscaping, fencing, driveway access, surface treatment and signage. The report, including a cost analysis, will be a major component of a transportation enhancement grant submission to VDOT.

The final report is available on the RRPDC web site at www.richmondregional.org. For answers to questions about the report, contact Christine Fix at 367-6001 or via e-mail at cfix@richmondregional.org.

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Richmond Regional PDC newsletter can also be accessed on our web site:

www.richmondregional.org

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