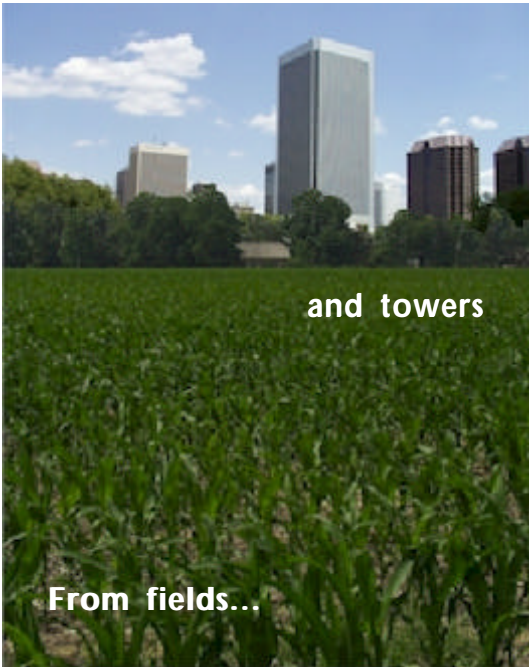


The Region is...

# My Backyard



and towers

From fields...

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



**Patricia S. O'Bannon, Chairman** became a board member of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission in 1996. A lifetime resident of the Richmond area, she is most recently a recipient of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Richmond Area YWCA *Outstanding Women Awards* for work in

domestic violence, workforce issues and water quality issues. Ms. O'Bannon is a governor-appointed member of the Local Government Advisory Committee to the Chesapeake Bay Commission and a member of the Virginia Workforce Investment Council. She has recently been appointed vice chair of the 2001-02 National Association of Counties Large Urban County Caucus Steering Committee.



**Rebecca M. Ringley, Vice Chairman** has served on the New Kent County Board of Supervisors since 1997. Her involvement in professional affiliations are many, to include the Virginia Association of Counties, the National Association of County Officials, the Hanover Health Advisory Board and the

New Kent County Legal Affairs Committee. In addition, Ms. Ringley actively participates in church activities, school committees and the Virginia Citizens Planning Association.

**Angela A. LaCombe, Treasurer** has been a member of the Ashland Town Council since July 2000. An active member of many groups, she received her bachelor's degree at Kansas State University and later earned an MBA through the University of Texas at Arlington. Ms. LaCombe has held positions in various parks and recreation departments both at state and

local levels. She is a former executive director of the Virginia Trails Association and also serves as a nonprofit organization consultant.



**John E. Gordon, Jr., Secretary** has been a member of the Hanover County Board of Supervisors since 1996, having served prior to this on the County School Board for 14 years. Mr. Gordon's repertoire includes appointments to many committees, including the VSBA Federal Relations Committee and the Governor's School Construction Committee. He is a

recipient of the Randolph-Macon College Youth Leader Proclamation and of the Virginia State College Alumni Certificate of Recognition. Mr. Gordon graduated from Smithdeal-Massey Business College and later received the Deming's Management Today and Tomorrow Certificate.

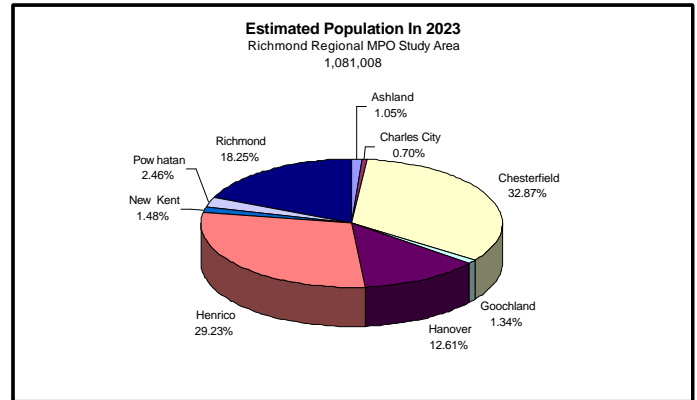
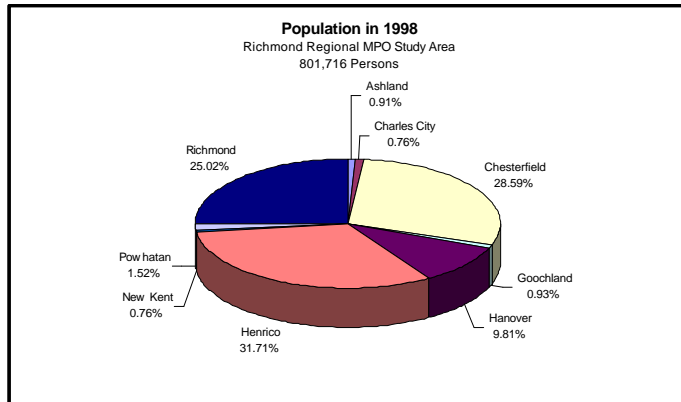


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# What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

## Homes and Neighborhoods

Growth rates for suburban and rural localities are expected to increase dramatically, based on projections prepared for the Long-Range Transportation Plan. This follows a trend throughout the nation: movement to the farther reaches of the suburban area. The pie charts below show evidence of this trend: the percentages for three of the rural counties and the counties of Chesterfield and Hanover show an increase from 1998 to 2023. In 1998, Henrico County had the highest population base followed by the City of Richmond, but by 2023, Chesterfield County is expected to surpass both Henrico County and the City of Richmond.



## Air, Land & Water

Upon the General Assembly passage of Chapter 259 last session, requiring the Secretary of Natural Resources to submit an annual report on progress made toward implementing the provisions of the Chesapeake Bay 2000 Agreement, local governments were requested to complete surveys for their incorporation into the report.

These surveys, aimed at uncovering what activities jurisdictions are undertaking that exceed baseline state programs under the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, were mailed to local governments this past summer. The report was scheduled to be distributed to the General Assembly November 1 and sent to print shortly thereafter. The Richmond Regional PDC will post the report on our web site as soon as it becomes available.

## Redistricting Update

Richmond Regional PDC staff has been providing the counties of Charles City, Goochland and Powhatan with technical assistance in the local redistricting process. GIS technology allows users, the board of supervisors and the public to instantly view and adjust local election boundaries and print large scale maps for public display. Staff provided GIS services at public

hearings in Goochland County on July 3, in Powhatan County on July 30 and in Charles City County on August 28.

Having heard citizens' comments, county supervisors were poised to approve new electoral districts and precincts. Goochland County approved new electoral districts on August 7. The Richmond Regional PDC provided the county with maps to include in the mandatory report to the Department of Justice (Virginia falls under the Federal Voting Rights Act and new boundaries must be approved by the U.S. Justice Department).

Recently, Powhatan County has been in the news for their redistricting efforts. The Richmond Times Dispatch reported that the favored redistricting scenario retains a minority majority district due to the inclusion of inmates at several correctional facilities. Figures indicate that the percentage of white population increased from 78 percent in 1990 to 81 percent in 2000, making a minority district difficult to achieve. The Board of Supervisors consulted with the Powhatan branch of the NAACP and ultimately approved the proposed scenario with a consensus from citizens and the local NAACP.

After a public hearing on August 28, Charles City County supervisors voted to approve a redistricting scenario at the next board meeting on September 25.

**TRIVIA Question 1:** What is a funicular? (Answer on page 7.)

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

# What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

## Government

### VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE



The 2002 session will be yet another ambitious year for legislation intended to help local governments. Some VML and VACO priorities this session include:

- **Education funding:** Support full funding of the state's share of the actual costs of the SOQ based on prevailing practices and for categorical educational mandates; support for a predictable source of funding for construction, technology and school safety issues.
- **Transportation and transit funding:** Support for full state funding for existing obligations and for addressing future documented funding shortfalls in transportation; support for greater funding equity for transit, including operations and capital.

- **HB 599 funding:** Support for clarifying that the annual growth in total HB 599 funding be based on the most recent official revenue forecast available when the General Assembly adopts its biennial budget and requiring that when the governor submits the biennial budget that HB 599 funding be based on the official state revenue forecast used to develop the budget; setting the HB 599 funding rate once for an entire biennium.
- **Commission on state and local tax restructuring:** Support for the Commission's findings, increase support for education, assume the costs of certain state mandated services, return a share of the state income tax to localities, participate in the Streamlined Sales Tax Project, grant counties taxing authority, review tax exemptions for non-governmental property, allow localities to retain authority to impose merchants capital and BPOL taxes and have increased opportunity to collaborate in regional economic development activities.

*The 2002 General Assembly Session convenes on Wednesday, January 9 and adjourns Saturday, March 9. Also, mark your calendars for the VACO/VML Legislation Day on Thursday, January 31st.*



**Chester A. Parsons** recently earned the right to add AICP to the end of his senior planner title. A staff member of the Richmond Regional PDC since 1999, his American Institute of Certified Planners certification ensures that he has met the highest standards

in the planning profession. To earn the certificate, Chet had to attain specific education and experience requirements plus pass a rigid examination in planning.

Chet was one of 28 individuals in the Virginia chapter certified this year, out of 36 applicants. Only 14,000 planners hold AICP certification nationwide.

## FY 01 Documents Now on CD

As a value-added service to our member jurisdictions, staff has created a CD comprised of all documents produced by the Richmond Regional PDC during FY 01.

The 40 documents on the CD include the Annual Report, the Richmond Regional Partnership Report, the TEA-21 How-to Manual, the 2023 Long-Range Transportation Plan and many other notable reports and maps. CDs were distributed at recent meetings to our PDC Board members.



**TRIVIA Question 2:** Put the following states in order of over age 65 population from largest to smallest: Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, California, and New York. (Answer on page 7.)

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

# What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

## Learning

The Capital Area Partners for Education Reform (CAPER) Steering Committee has scheduled monthly meetings in order to discuss issues related to raising the bar for Richmond area students. Represented by school divisions and J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, the Committee meetings address the challenges associated with increasing academic and skill levels.

The "Explore the Excitement" program, a group effort emphasizing preparation for the SOLs and sponsored in part by CAPER, offers graduate level credit for each of six modules for teachers in grades K-14 at Virginia Commonwealth University. Through this effort, teachers become knowledgeable in the changing economy of our region's workplace, allowing them to better prepare students to become productive members of our workforce. In addition, under CAPER's direction:

- 100 counselors from area middle and high schools attended roundtable discussions with 30 business representatives to better understand the needs of education and local employers.
- CAPER partners with Greater Richmond Business-Education Partnership to raise the technology fluency of secondary students.
- Students have visited J. Sargeant Reynolds campuses to better understand career and educational opportunities at the community college.
- School divisions have applied for mini-grants totaling over \$5,000 to fund career-related activities in their individual schools.
- Counselors obtained information related to WORKFORCE ONE technology tools and about Work Keys.

*(Special thanks to the Capital Area Partners for Education Reform for providing this information.)*

Virginia produced approximately 1.5 million new jobs during the last two decades. During that same time, the Richmond Regional PDC saw an increase of more than 199,000 new jobs accounting for 13 percent of the state total. —*Richmond Area 2023 Long-Range Transportation Plan*

## Jobs

The Greater Richmond Partnership, Inc. completed seven years of operation on June 30, 2001. Good progress has been made on new five-year goals (July 1, 1999-June 30, 2004) to assist 200 new and expanding companies, including 40 new foreign affiliated firms, and to create 50,000 new jobs and \$2 billion in investment.

**Capital One**, Greater Richmond's largest private employer with approximately 10,000 associates in the area announced plans to add nearly 7,000 additional employees over the next four years.

**First Union Securities** announced plans to build two buildings in Innsbrook in Henrico County to accommodate an additional 1,700 employees. The company also will add 200 employees at their office in downtown Richmond.

**Infineon Technologies**, formerly White Oak Semiconductor, announced construction of a new administrative building and a shell building. The shell building will be equipped to manufacture leading edge memory chips using new 300mm wafer technology. At full build out, the new module will employ an additional 1,000 people.

Ten new foreign affiliated companies located facilities in Greater Richmond in 2000.

**Lawson Marden**, a manufacturer of specialty packaging materials, was the largest new firm with 140 employees. Also choosing Greater Richmond were **Island Leisure Products**, a manufacturer of playground equipment; **Recording Architecture Ltd.**, a designer and builder of recording studios; **Web of Care.com Inc.**, a pharmaceutical distributor and **Corporate Physicians International**, a web-based physician referral service. Distribution and sales offices were opened by **Design Depot Intershop** (furniture), **Inge-Glas** (hand painted ornaments), **FiSA** (industrial equipment), **Jabro Tools** (precision tools) and **Jungheinrich Lift Truck** (material handling equipment). *(Special thanks to the Greater Richmond Partnership for providing this information.)*

**TRIVIA Question 3:** What percentage of cellphone owners reported using the device while driving in 2000? (Answer on page 7.)

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

# Getting There...

## Southeast High-Speed Rail Corridor

Imagine boarding a train in downtown Richmond and arriving at Union Station in downtown Washington, D.C., in less than 90 minutes. That dream could become reality.

The Washington to Richmond line is under study as part of the Southeast High-Speed Rail (SEHSR) corridor which runs from Washington to Richmond, Raleigh and Charlotte, N.C. With a maximum speed of 110 mph and an average speed of 85-90 mph, the SEHSR corridor would provide business and leisure travelers a competitive alternative to air and auto travel.

One of the first steps in the study process is deciding on which line the train should run. While there is only one line north of Richmond (to Washington), south of Richmond to Raleigh and Charlotte there are several alternative lines available for consideration. In order to decide which is the best available location, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) have recently conducted a series of public information meetings on the draft Tier I Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in cities and towns throughout the study corridor. A final Tier I EIS document, defining the location

for the high-speed rail line (i.e., selected alternative), should be ready by July 2002. The Tier II EIS process (i.e., preliminary engineering and project cost) should begin shortly after the Tier I EIS document is approved by NCDOT, VDRPT and the USDOT.

For additional information on this and other transportation initiatives, contact Dan Lysy (367-6001) at the Richmond Regional PDC.

### A Glimpse at the 2000 Census Supplementary Survey

- 128 million commuters were observed: 97 million in single occupant vehicles, 14 million in car pools and another 14 million in other modes
- The trend toward the single occupant vehicle increased from 73 percent to 76 percent
- Car pooling and walking continued to decline; transit increased in number of riders (5 percent)
- Household vehicle ownership is now at 1.72 from 1.66 in 1990

*For the complete version of this document, visit our web site at [www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org)*

## Meet Paul Fisher, Executive Director

Fisher is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill having earned a masters degree in regional planning. Prior to that, the recently-selected Richmond Regional PDC executive director attended Purdue University, his intended major being radio and television broadcasting. Recognizing in his freshman year that he was interested in planning, and learning that Indiana University offered a better curriculum, he transferred and received a bachelor's degree, majoring in urban/economic geography and minoring in political science. He also earned a certificate in urban studies.

After graduating from North Carolina, he decided to stay in the southeast area, and so began his career in planning for the City of Virginia Beach.

After working in a series of positions for the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and related regional agencies,



he served as director of planning and plans and policy officer for the City of Suffolk.

When asked what, professionally, he is most proud of, Mr. Fisher's response is, "That people in leadership positions have consistently trusted me to take on increasingly challenging jobs and responsibilities and that the teams I have been a part of have been successful."

"I want to see the Richmond Regional PDC staff continue to develop professionally as a team so that we can most effectively execute the regional work program desired by our member jurisdictions acting as the Commission. Over time, this should enable us to feel that we have made a positive

contribution to the betterment of the region as a place to live and work."

**TRIVIA Question 4:** What do odd-numbered route numbers signify? (Answer on page 7.)

## Getting There...

### More on Environmental Justice and Why Is The MPO So Interested In It?

The last issue of *My Backyard* introduced the topic of environmental justice. It explained that in 1994, President Bill Clinton signed Executive Order 12898 which restated and brought renewed emphasis on social equity laws passed by Congress as early as 1964.

The executive order requires all federal agencies to include achieving the mandates of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, and other congressional acts passed in the mid-1970s as part of their agency mission. These acts prohibit discrimination against minorities, low income, elderly, disabled and other populations that may be underserved by transportation, and require that disproportionately high and adverse impacts on these groups be minimized, mitigated or eliminated.

It mandates that any monetary aid received from a federal agency must be spent in accordance with environmental justice requirements. It further requires that impacts and benefits from federal aid programs strike a balance between the benefits and burdens of such programs across all communities. Transportation funds directed for allocation by the MPO come, in some part, from the United States Department of Transportation and therefore all MPO transportation plans, programs, activities and projects must meet these



(Continued on page 8.)

### Route 288 Construction Update

According to *Connect*, a newsletter for the Route 288 project, there are several work zones bustling with activity to complete Route 288 from I-95 to I-64. Current construction efforts include:



- Construction of a bridge across the James River. River users will notice a heavy increase in the number of barges, equipment and materials coming into the area.
- In Powhatan clearing is complete from Bernards Creek to Route 711 and grading is underway. From Route 711 to the James River Bridge grading and drainage projects are in progress.
- In Goochland County, motorists can expect the following traffic control measures:
  - River Road will be closed to through traffic
  - Lane closures on I-64
  - Broad Street will be narrowed to two lanes near the project trailers
  - Patterson Avenue will be narrowed from four lanes to two lanes
- Also in Goochland:
  - Grading and drainage work is in progress at the Broad Branch to Northbound flyover, the Northbound flyover to Tuckahoe Creek, the Tuckahoe interchange and Tuckahoe Parkway

(Continued on page 8.)

**TRIVIA Question 5:** Without looking at a dollar bill, what does the eagle hold in his talons? (Answer on page 7.)

## Getting There...

### Obtaining Funding For Transportation Projects From Your MPO

Given that approximately 90% of the MPO funds for transportation projects are determined by the Virginia Department of Transportation, it is critical that any groups interested in obtaining Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and Enhancement funds understand the process and partnerships that can affect funding decisions. The trick is getting to the right people at the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that can give adequate consideration to your programs. Below are some ways in which other groups have been able to better integrate their efforts into the regional transportation planning process:

Long-Range Transportation plans are updated every three years in larger metropolitan areas and every five years in smaller urban areas (Richmond's is every three years). Learn the date of the next update and try to get on the task force.

All MPO, Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) meetings are open public meetings that have a public comment period. If you can't get on the agenda for these groups, you still can speak during the public comment period.

Get someone from your program appointed to the MPO, TAC, or CTAC. If you can't get appointed right away, start showing up for all their meetings. You will get noticed and eventually appointed to something.

Learn your local transportation improvement program (TIP) process, especially timing and funding options. Make sure you go to all meetings regarding the TIP and don't be afraid to request money from the MPO.

MPO funding can be on a lengthy cycle, so you might get funding but it might not kick-in for three years. If you have ideas for programs but don't see them happening for a few years, put your request in now.

Never stop trying. As the Richmond MPO staff learned during the planning process, people that are neutral or somewhat against what you are proposing can turn into powerful allies.

Learn your natural allies. Depending on your transportation project, groups will back your idea if it provides benefits.

Environmental justice is a hot topic right now for most MPOs. Reverse commute programs, JOBS busses, and the like are popular programs to fund because of the environmental justice benefit it brings to MPO plans and programs.

Finally, try to get on the agendas of as many civic and neighborhood groups as you are comfortable with.

If your project intends to provide things such as sidewalks, bicycle paths, street beautification, transportation building rehabilitation, and the like, consider seeking Enhancement funds. These funds are intended to integrate the transportation network with the surrounding community so that the impacts of transportation can be positive for community character.

While the state controls Enhancement funds, Richmond Regional Planning District Commission staff can answer questions about your projects eligibility, help you obtain the necessary forms to request funding, and provide tips for ways to make your application more appealing to those that decide how the funds should be spent. Staff can also guide your application through the MPO so that it can be endorsed.

Remember that the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission staff cares how the transportation network impacts our community. As such, we are ready to assist any locality, citizen group, or organization that can help the MPO achieve its goals of a balanced transportation system that has a positive effect on the quality of life in the Richmond region.

### Answers to Trivia Questions

- 1 A funicular is an inclined plane cog railway used to transport passengers and vehicles up/down steep slopes.
- 2 The state with the largest over age 65 population is California, followed by Florida, New York, Texas and Pennsylvania.
- 3 Seventy-five percent of cellphone users reported using them while driving in 2000.
- 4 Odd-numbered route numbers run north and south; even-numbered route numbers run east and west.
- 5 The eagle holds an olive branch in one talon, arrows in the other.

For more information on this and other articles, contact the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission at 367-6001 or e-mail us at [richmondregional@richmondregional.org](mailto:richmondregional@richmondregional.org).

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## Getting There...

*(Continued from page 6.)*

### Environmental Justice

requirements. Finally, the requirements apply to more than just the allocation of federal funds; they also include provisions that minority and low-income communities have full and fair participation in all phases of decision-making.

To address these concerns, the MPO has undertaken several programs to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination laws. During the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) processes, analyses are completed to determine if burdens and benefits are balanced. The MPO targeted outreach to health and human service agencies during public input phases of the LRTP and TIP, hired a consultant to review public input practices so that outreach to environmental justice communities can be improved and will be developing census-based demographic analysis for those communities.

For more information on this topic, contact Dan Lysy, Transportation Director, at (804) 367-6001.

*(Continued from page 6.)*

### Route 288 Construction Update

- Clearing is in progress for the section between the Route 250 interchange and the I-64 interchange
- Grading is underway between Broad Street and I-64
- Bridge work, overpass and flyover (elevated entrance and exit ramps) continues in the following areas:
  - Tuckahoe Creek Parkway over Route 288
  - Route 288 over Route 76
  - Flyover A over Route 288
  - Northbound 288 over Broad Branch
  - Northbound 288 over Tuckahoe Creek
  - Route 288 over West Creek

For continuing updates and information about the Route 288 project call 1-800-542-2855 or check out the Route 288 project web site at [www.route288.com](http://www.route288.com).

**Please note: Our telephone and fax numbers have recently changed to:**

**(804) 367-6001-telephone  
(804) 367-4375-fax**

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## Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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

[www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org)

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