

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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Public Participation in the Long-Range Transportation Plan Process

Summer 2003

The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) provides the framework for planning the region's transportation network, addressing a twenty-year horizon at a minimum. For areas designated as non-attainment for air quality conformity such as the Richmond region, the LRTP must be updated every three years. In addition, federal regulations require that the plan demonstrates how the transportation projects can be implemented based on funding resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be available. Federal requirements also state that the plan must consider the movement of both people and goods and must include multimodal strategies to manage congestion.

The current edition of the LRTP was adopted by the MPO in March 2001 and deemed to meet air quality conformity standards by FHWA and FTA in May 2001. The next edition of the LRTP has begun and is anticipated to be completed in early 2004.

Federal regulations require adequate opportunity for public officials, interested parties and citizen involvement in the development of the Long-Range Transportation Plan. The current update to the plan is scheduled to have three specific events for public participation and input.

The first planned opportunity was a series of public workshops held throughout the region in mid-June to solicit input on projects in the previous plan and to discuss citizen views on transportation goals for the region. The second series of meetings, planned for

October 2003, will provide for public participation in determining the needs and priorities of the region's transportation system. The final planned opportunity for public involvement is scheduled for **February 2004** and will provide an opportunity for public review and comment on the draft LRTP.

Citizens are also given the opportunity to comment directly to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or to one of its committees (TAC, CTAC or EDAC) at their regularly-scheduled meetings.

In addition to this, a transportation survey was distributed throughout the month of June in order to solicit public input on the region's transportation system and was also available on the RRPDC web site.

Furthermore, the MPO must seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system or those overburdened by its impacts, including but not limited to low-income and minority populations. This process is generally referred to as Environmental Justice. As part of the LRTP update process, the MPO will identify high concentrations of minority and low-income populations in the region, evaluate the distribution of transportation projects' impacts/benefits on these populations and determine the distribution of funding for transportation projects in these underserved areas.

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What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

Jobs

GREATER RICHMOND PARTNERSHIP FIVE-YEAR GOALS	ACHIEVED 1999-2002	% OF GOALS ACHIEVED
• Increase employment by 50,000 with new, quality jobs*	28,800	58%
• Recruit one new semiconductor fabrication plant	0	0
• 200 new/expanded corporations**	91	46%
• 40 new foreign-affiliated companies	25	62%
• 400 existing companies provided with expansion assistance***	412	103%
• \$2 billion increase in corporate capital investment	\$2,363,195,000	118%
• 2,000 small businesses counseled through the Greater Richmond Small Business Development Center***	1,749	87%
• 7,500 small business people trained through the Greater Richmond Small Business Development Center***	6,816	91%

*Virginia Employment Commission data through December 2002
 **A company may be counted more than once if it has multiple projects in several localities
 ***Through February 28, 2003

The biggest news on the horizon: **Philip Morris USA Inc.**'s announcement that it will relocate its corporate headquarters from New York City to Richmond!

It also announced it will invest \$300 million in its Richmond manufacturing center—the largest single private capital investment in the City in 25 years. The headquarters will be located in the 250,000-square foot former home of Reynolds Metals Company at 6001 West Broad Street and will bring an estimated 450 highly paid Philip Morris employees to Greater Richmond.

Magellan Systems International LLC chose Chesterfield County for research and production facilities for a new superfiber with military and aerospace applications. It is estimated that 25-35 new employees will be hired by year-end and that investment will approach \$40 million over the next few years.

Danaher Power Solutions, a subsidiary of Danaher Corp., announced a facility to make power quality and reliability products in Henrico County. The new operation, a \$1.7 million investment, will add 180 new jobs and save 81 jobs.

Pacific Beverages LLC moved its headquarters and Pacific Chai production plant to Chesterfield County from Maryland.

Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company announced plans to build a nylon production facility in Chesterfield County. The \$14 million plant is expected to employ 30 people and to begin production in early 2004.

AERC.com announced a facility in Hanover County to recycle fluorescent light bulbs.

Harmony Products, a manufacturer of organic fertilizer, announced a facility in the City of Richmond.

Comcast Corp. will open a new Greater Richmond customer service center with 120 employees. Office facilities also were announced by **Austin Consulting** (information technology consultant), **Compass Energy Services** (energy management and sales), **Emc2 Corp.** (data center), **Fiserv, Inc.** (check processing), and **AARP** (Virginia office).

Havertys Furniture Company and **Tire Centers LLC** announced new distribution centers in the area. New operations also include **Eagle Teleservices** (roadside assistance call center), **FiberPlus** (fiber optic cable contractor) and **Sara Lee Corporation** (trucking services). **DuPont** opened a \$30 million, 800,000-square foot logistics center in Chesterfield County in October. The new James River Logistics Center consolidates seven former warehouse
(Continued on Page 8.)

The Greater Richmond Partnership, Inc. is assisting 200 new and expanding companies, including 40 new foreign affiliated firms, which will create 50,000 new jobs and \$2 billion in investment for the Richmond region.

What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

Government



The most controversial bill on the Richmond Regional PDC's radar screen during the 2003 General Assembly Session was the manufactured housing bill, HB 2215 (HB 1229 last year). This twice-defeated piece of legislation would have required local governments to allow double-wide manufactured homes in zoning districts the same as single family homes.

Two differences between this year's legislation and last year's were that 1.) the home would have had to be at least 80 percent of the size of the existing houses in a half-mile radius and 2.) it would have applied to two zoning districts in each locality. This bill was defeated when it got to the House floor vote.

The Yeas and Nays Report—the RRPDC's final legislative report for the session—as well as the post Veto Session supplement, have been distributed to PDC members and is also available on the RRPDC web site.

Regional Competitiveness Funding Eliminated

The Regional Competitive Program experienced a drastic blow this year with the elimination of funding. The

Department of Housing and Community Development has nonetheless continued the requalification process (the Richmond Regional Partnership was scheduled to apply for requalification this year).

After consideration and advice by the Richmond Regional Competitiveness Committee, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission has decided it will not prepare a requalification application, citing the cost involved with the application process would range from \$19,200 to \$34,700 at a minimum, depending upon the public participation venue chosen. Neither of these amounts are readily available in the RRPDC's already strapped budget to work toward a program which may not be realized.

If, at a future date, funding does become available, the Richmond Regional Competitiveness Committee and the Richmond Regional PDC will eagerly participate on behalf of our region.

For additional information on this and other legislative issues, please contact Patricia Villa at 367-6001 or by e-mail at pvilla@richmondregional.org.

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Public Participation in the Long-Range Transportation Plan Process

The update of the LRTP will provide early and continuous opportunity for public participation. Citizens are encouraged to attend any of the series of public workshops, complete the transportation survey and submit comments, utilize the MPO and committee meetings for comments and to log on to the RRPDC web site for further information regarding meetings, regional data or transportation documents.



The Richmond Regional Planning District Commission will be hosting the 14th Annual Virginia GIS Conference in 2003. This *not-to-be-missed event* attracts over 400 GIS users, managers, students, educators, consultants and staff from all levels of government and business organizations.

Visit www.richmondregional.org/GISconference2003/ for conference details, or contact Alan Gregory at the Richmond Regional PDC at 367-6001 or by e-mail at agregory@richmondregional.org.

Richmond Regional PDC Administrative Division planning for you:
Jodie Evans, Peter Sweetland, Patricia Villa and Kathy Barrett...**Easy to Love!**

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What's Happening in Our Capital Region?

Goochland County's New Village Design



Goochland County recently adopted the Goochland 2023 Comprehensive Plan. While conducting public meetings for community input on the plan, many citizens spoke of a desire to incorporate design standards into the established county villages, addressing access, site design and aesthetics, among other things. Goochland County has since requested that Richmond Regional PDC staff act as technical support for the county's design review committee in developing a design overlay district for key county roadways.

To date, the RRPDC staff has assisted the county with conducting public meetings to develop guidelines for a village design and with developing illustrations and graphic aids to accompany the design guideline text.

An initial meeting in March was held to discuss the approach to developing the guidelines. Following that, the group was split into two focus groups in order to concentrate on the areas of concern. The focus groups met weekly, over a period of one month to develop design guidelines specific to the Courthouse Village and the Village of Oilville. To date, both groups have developed a complete set of design guidelines and are ready to move forward to the next step: presentation to the Design Review Committee.

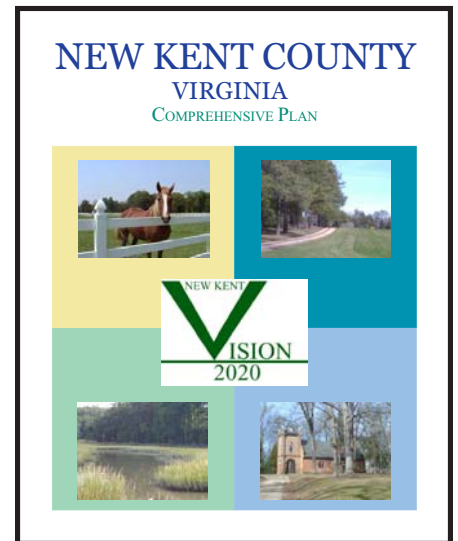
For additional information on this project, contact Todd Rigler at the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission.

New Kent County Promotes its Rural Character

New Kent County is scheduled to complete their comprehensive plan update with the Board of Supervisor's approval on July 14. With the assistance of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, the plan—developed over the course of two years with extensive citizen input—promotes maintaining the county's attractive, rural character while providing opportunities for the creation of income and wealth in the community.

The Plan discusses existing conditions including: population and household growth, economic factors, natural resources, transportation, public utilities, public facilities, economic development and land use. The bulk of the Plan focuses on the future of the county by directing the growth and character through a series of goals, objectives and implementation strategies. These were developed through a series of joint work sessions which included the New Kent County Planning Commission, the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Board, county and Richmond Regional PDC staffs and members of the public.

RRPDC staff contributed to the plan development and approval by writing sections of the comprehensive plan on natural resources and transportation; assisting in the development of the goals, objectives and strategies; providing data and regional information as well as contributing planning and mapping expertise.



For a copy of the New Kent Comprehensive Plan, visit the county's web site at www.co.newkent.state.va.us or contact New Kent County Planning Director, George Homewood at GMHomewood@co.newkent.state.va.us or Christine Fix at cfix@richmondregional.org.

Richmond Regional PDC Planning and Information Systems Division planning for you: Jacqueline Stewart, Christine Fix, Joseph Ndanga, Alan Gregory, Leigh Medford, Todd Rigler and Rhonda Bailey...Easy to Love!

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

Getting There...

Congestion Management

On our highways and on our minds....

Traffic congestion. Where does it regularly occur along our region's roadways? How long does it take us to get to and from work everyday? Where are traffic incidents—such as broken down vehicles and crashes—located so that we can travel along an alternative route? We all ask ourselves these questions every day.



To answer these questions and provide an ongoing assessment of our region's transportation system, Richmond Regional PDC staff recently initiated the process for updating the Congestion Management System or CMS. The CMS is being updated in conjunction with the recent kickoff of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization 2026 Long-Range Transportation Plan update.

Federal transportation regulations require metropolitan areas with populations exceeding 200,000 to develop a congestion management system. The CMS is a research effort focusing on the most efficient use of new and existing transportation facilities through the identification and management of congested locations along our region's roads and highways. The process provides information on transportation system performance and its recommendations focus on alternative strategies for alleviating congestion and enhancing mobility and safety for people and goods. Examples of such strategies are carpool and vanpool programs and the monitoring of our major travel corridors with video cameras

that work in conjunction with electronic message boards that notify drivers of congested locations. In developing the CMS, RRPDC staff's goal is to manage an effort that identifies, recommends and implements the most effective transportation strategies to enhance travel in our region.

Several types of transportation data are required to develop the CMS. The information supports an extensive analysis of current traffic conditions during morning and afternoon rush hours as well as projected conditions in 2026. Traffic volumes, vehicle occupancy rates, high crash locations, GRTC ridership figures and roadway travel times constitute some of the information analyzed in the process.

To develop the travel time data, RRPDC staff conducts a comprehensive regional travel time survey utilizing global positioning system (GPS) and geographic information system (GIS) technologies. GPS units are used for data collection and GIS software is used to conduct data analysis and provide visual displays of the study results. Travel time data is collected along major regional roadways such as Interstate 64, Route 250, Parham Road and the Chippenham Parkway. Data collection involves a vehicle equipped with a GPS receiver (see right) and a vehicle driver who attempts to drive with the flow of traffic, while never exceeding the posted speed.



During each travel time run, the GPS unit collects geographic position, time and speed data every five seconds; this data is then fed into a GIS system at the Richmond Regional PDC office for analysis. The results show average speeds and travel times for all of the roadways analyzed in the survey.

As the CMS update is being conducted in conjunction with the 2026 LRTP update, major work activities are expected to be completed by the end of 2003 with adoption by the MPO, planned for spring 2004.

For additional information on the CMS, contact Larry Hagin at 367-6001 or by e-mail at lhagin@richmondregional.org.

Urban Transportation Division planning for you: Daniel Lysy, Michael Clements, Jin Lee, Lawrence Hagin, Bradley Shelton and Sharon Robeson...Easy to Love!

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Getting There...

Richmond Regional PDC Internship Program



Since the General Assembly first created planning district commissions, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission has realized the value of supporting the continued learning experiences that can be gained from a successful internship program.

Because of that

fundamental belief, the RRPDC has always actively participated in Virginia Commonwealth University's Planning School internship program. In the past five years, the RRPDC has employed 12 interns (anywhere from one to three interns per academic semester), benefiting local governments, VCU, the RRPDC and interns alike.

When posed the question, *"What is the most valuable skill you acquired through your internship with the Richmond Regional PDC?"* our current and past interns each came up with similar responses, including:

1. Gaining valuable experiences to use in real life situations in dealing with day-to-day challenges
2. Public speaking skills in front of a professional audience
3. Access to different resources, including staff's institutional knowledge regarding the region and use of software, both in learning the new software and in staff support
4. Learning the complexities of the transportation process
5. Becoming familiar with the regional yet individual concerns governing the decision-making process of local governments
6. Acquiring a professional work ethic
7. Recognizing the importance of communication with supervisors and peers
8. Hands-on technical skills in the use of GPS equipment and software

Through the RRPDC's mentoring, not only do interns gain job experience, build skills and get paid for it, they can also build professional relationships to maximize the potential for future employment.

Not all skills required by employers are technical in nature. In contrast, what many employers are searching for are candidates

with a good balance of technical *and* "soft" skills—including teamwork, good written and verbal communication skills as well as analytical and leadership skills. Looking at the list above, the RRPDC seems to be a good internship program which allows interns to hone in on those as well as the technical skills!

Meet Michael Clements

A hearty welcome to Michael "Mike" Clements, the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission's newest staff member! Mr. Clements is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology where he earned Bachelor and Masters degrees in Civil Engineering. He also earned an undergraduate certificate in Urban Policy. Mr. Clements is a registered Professional Engineer in five states, including Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Massachusetts. He is currently seeking to obtain his registration in Virginia.

After graduating from Georgia Tech, Mr. Clements started his career as an engineer/planner working for the Florida Department of Transportation in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. While employed by the FDOT District Four Planning Department, Mr. Clements' responsibilities included access management, long-range planning, air quality conformity, travel demand forecasting/modeling and various traffic study reviews for local counties and municipalities.

After leaving FDOT in 1997, Mr. Clements worked for McMahon Associates, Inc., a transportation engineering consulting firm headquartered near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. As a consultant, Mr. Clements gained a wide array of experience—from preparing traffic impact studies for private developments to performing corridor studies and preparing the transportation components of comprehensive plans for local governments. He has managed parking studies for museums, hospitals, towns and schools/colleges and has prepared transit studies for regional transit authorities and conducted truck and heavy vehicle routing studies for regional planning agencies.



Mr. Clements states, "I have always had a strong desire for public sector work whether actually employed by or working as a consultant for a public agency. The satisfaction that comes from planning and engineering solutions to community transportation problems is a powerful motivator for me."

Your opinion counts...Stay tuned for the next set of public workshops to be held in October! For further information, contact Mike Clements at 367-6001 or by e-mail at mclements@richmondregional.org.

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Getting There...

GOOD PLANNING PRACTICES OBSERVED AT THE NATIONAL PLANNING CONFERENCE HELD IN DENVER



View of mountains preserved as seen from the "one mile above sea level" step of the state capitol building.



Cross town pedestrian mall with free, non-polluting mall ride buses providing constant service.



Mixed land use redevelopment of closed airports—Stapleton International Airport and Lowery Air Force Base.



Park and ride garage and surface parking on access ramp to main highway connecting Denver and Boulder.



Ground level retail with residential above in mixed use town center adjacent to light rail station—Englewood Civic Center.

Washington, D.C. will host the APA National Planning Conference April 24-28, 2004 as the APA celebrates its 25th anniversary.

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What's Happening...

(Continued from Page 2.)

sites to handle the company's Tyvek, Nomex and Kevlar advanced fibers produced locally and shipped worldwide.

Alfa Laval celebrated the official opening of a \$10 million expansion of its plant in Henrico County's International Business Park in August. The 90,000-square foot expansion adds 100 jobs. Alfa Laval moved its corporate headquarters to the area in 2002.

Manchester Industries (paper and paperboard), **Wella Manufacturing of Virginia** (hair care products), **Philip Morris USA** (cigarettes) and **Lyotropic Pharmaceuticals** (micro-encapsulated pharmaceuticals) also planned expansions for their facilities.

Office expansions included **OSI Group**, adding 110 jobs to its collections office in Hanover County and **First Health Services Corp.**, adding 145 jobs in Henrico County. **Wachovia Securities**, **Supervalu** and **Insmed** also announced expansions during the year.

(Special thanks to the Greater Richmond Partnership for providing this information.)

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Congratulations are in Order!

Congratulations to Todd Rigler and Tony Greulich, who recently earned Masters degrees in Urban and Regional Planning at VCU.

Todd is an Associate Planner in the Planning and Information Systems Division and has been involved in many undertakings. He assisted Goochland County in developing their overlay guidelines, as well as Powhatan County with their comprehensive plan update. In addition, Todd is involved in the Rural Scenic Roads study and the Flood Prone Roadway study.



Tony is the RRPDC's senior-most Intern, performing GPS and GIS duties for the Urban Transportation/MPO Division. He has assisted in many transportation assignments, including background research for the Henrico County Parking Zoning Requirement project and the Transportation Improvement Plan as well as Census 2000 Employment.

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

www.richmondregional.org

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