

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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## Moving to Stony Point I

Summer 2007

The Richmond Regional Planning District Commission is not only moving but is expanding as well, in an effort to improve the functionality of the Boardroom and to accommodate staff operating needs.

The agency will launch the move on May 24 and we expect to be fully operational in the new facility by June 1. Minimal disruption with the RRPDC web site is anticipated, but viewers may experience some inaccessibility during the first two days due to the moving of equipment.

The new facility at Stony Point I is easy to get to for our patrons because of its convenient location adjacent to a GRTC bus stop (see article, page 2). This will

allow even more citizens to participate in our public meetings and workshops.

The Richmond Regional PDC Boardroom at the Laburnum Avenue location has always been open to our member governments and agencies affiliated with us, and this policy will continue at our new location.



The Richmond Regional PDC's new location at Stony Point I—9211 Forest Hill Avenue in Richmond—with a GRTC bus stop at our door (see GRTC article, page 7).

After the move, it is our understanding that the Laburnum Avenue conference room will still be available; those wishing to secure the Laburnum Avenue facility should contact Brandywine Property Management at 330.3900.

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission  
 9211 Forest Hill Avenue, Suite 200  
 Richmond, VA 23235-6874  
 tel: 804.323.2033 — fax: 804.323.2025  
[www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org)





# What's Happening in Our Capital Region






## More Convenient Access with GRTC

As of June 1, it will be even easier to get to the Richmond Regional PDC. Conveniently located adjacent to a GRTC bus stop, our new location has become more readily accessible, especially since there are two routes servicing the area Monday through Friday—a local route as well as an express route! Below are the routes with important information:

### Route 70 - Forest Hill

-  This is the local route connecting downtown Richmond with Forest Hill at Stony Point.
-  Service in this area begins at around 7:04 a.m. (first bus arriving from downtown at 7:04 a.m.) and ends at 8:45 p.m. (last bus leaving Stony Point at 8:45 p.m.).
-  Service is provided via Chippenham Parkway or via Forest Hill with buses alternating the route every trip.
-  Weekend service on Route 70 travels as far as Huguenot High School on Forest Hill.

### Route 64 - Stony Point Express\*

-  This is the express route connecting downtown Richmond with the Old Gun Road and Duryea Drive neighborhood (traveling by Stony Point on its way to downtown).
-  Service runs only between 6:10 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. and between 3:40 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.
-  This route also services stops along Forest Hill Avenue between Stony Point and the entrance to Powhite Parkway ramp. Once it enters the Powhite, it travels express to downtown. The return trip is similar for route travel and bus stops service.

*(Please note that this route will reach the PDC bus stop after having traveled west on Huguenot and back through the Old Gun and Duryea neighborhood.)*

\* Express fare applies on Route 64-Stony Point Express

## Getting Around in Our Capital Region



**Stony Point I**  
9211 Forest Hill Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23235  
tel: 804.323.2033  
fax: 804.323.2025

### DIRECTIONS:

#### From the North—

Take I-95 south to exit 80 (I-195/I-64 west); stay in the left lane for exit to I-195. Remain on I-195 south to Powhite Parkway south (VA 76). After the tollbooth, take the exit to Chippenham Parkway north (VA 150). Exit off of Chippenham Parkway to Huguenot Road (VA 147) and make a left at the traffic light onto Huguenot Road. At the third traffic light on Huguenot, turn right onto Forest Hill Avenue. You will see a lake on the right; turn into the parking lot and continue to the first building on the right (9211 Forest Hill Avenue).

#### From the South—

Take I-95 north to exit 67 (Chippenham Parkway/VA 150). Go north on Chippenham Parkway to the Huguenot Road exit (VA 147) and turn left at the traffic light onto Huguenot Road. At the third traffic light on Huguenot, turn right onto Forest Hill Avenue. You will see a lake on the right; turn into the parking lot and continue to the first building on the right (9211 Forest Hill Avenue).

#### From the West—

Take I-64 east to exit 186 (I-195 south) to Powhite Parkway south (VA 76). After the tollbooth, take the exit to Chippenham Parkway north (VA 150). Exit off of Chippenham Parkway to Huguenot Road (VA 147) and turn left at the traffic light on Huguenot Road. At the third traffic light on Huguenot, turn right onto Forest Hill Avenue. You will see a lake on the right; turn into the parking lot and continue to the first building on the right (9211 Forest Hill Avenue).

#### From the East (2 tollbooths)—

Take I-64 west and exit onto I-95 south. Take exit 74A (Downtown Expressway/VA 195). After the tollbooth, take Powhite Parkway south (VA 76). After the next tollbooth, take the exit to Chippenham Parkway north (VA 150). Exit off of Chippenham Parkway to Huguenot Road (VA 147) and turn left at the traffic light on Huguenot Road. At the third traffic light on Huguenot, turn right onto Forest Hill Avenue. You will see a lake on the right; turn into the parking lot and continue to the first building on the right (9211 Forest Hill Avenue).

Want to receive the RRPDC newsletter by e-mail? Just let us know at 804.323.2033  
or e-mail us at [RRPDC@richmondregional.org](mailto:RRPDC@richmondregional.org)

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

# What's Happening in Our Capital Region

## Rural Long-Range Transportation Planning

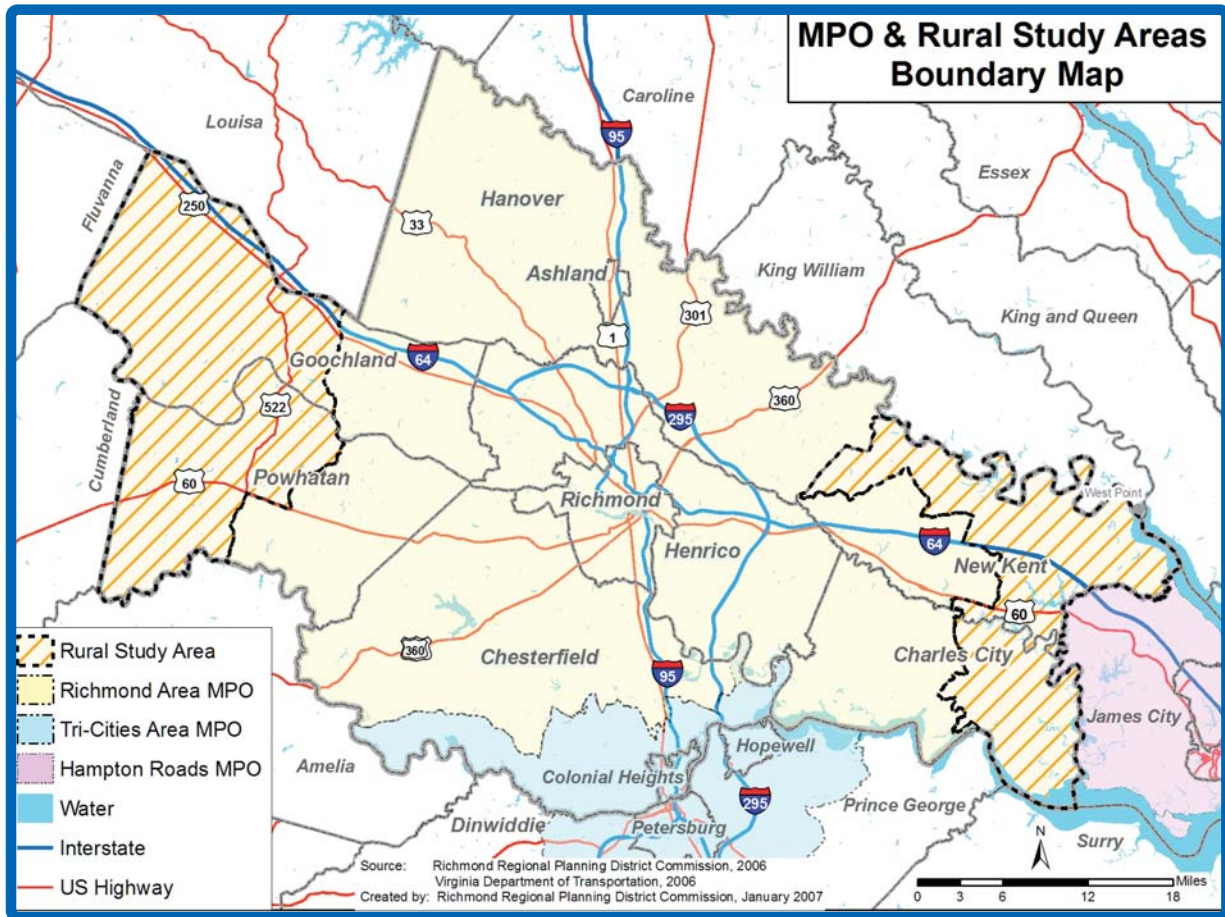
The RRPDC recently held its first meeting for the initial phase of long-range transportation planning for the rural areas in our region.

The planning is part of a new statewide process recently undertaken by regions across the

## 2031 Long-Range Transportation Plan

The Richmond Area MPO is beginning to update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the metropolitan area, also called the MPO “study area.”

This study area is the City of Richmond and the surrounding jurisdictions that are anticipated to be



Commonwealth through grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Eastern portions of New Kent and Charles City counties and the western portions of Goochland and Powhatan counties make up the region’s rural study area, also referred to as the non-MPO study area, because they are not inside of the metropolitan planning organization study area boundary.

*(Continued on Page 7.)*

urbanized within 20 years from now depicted on the map shown above.

There are many components to the LRTP, and the LRTP has a legal foundation inasmuch as it must conform to federal regulations for regional transportation planning. Any transportation related project that receives federal funds and is categorized as “regionally significant,” must be included in the LRTP along with an estimate of the

*(Continued on Page 8.)*

Don't forget: The RRPDC's large conference room is available to our member jurisdictions and affiliates for meetings. It's as simple as picking up the phone and calling us!

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# Getting Around in Our Capital Region



## L RTP Committee to Advise Development

Under the direction of the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), an advisory committee has been established to oversee the development of an updated Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the Richmond region (*see article, page 4*).

The LRTP Advisory Committee consists of a mix of technical staff members from area jurisdictions, citizen advisors and advocates for specialized transportation services for the elderly and disabled. In addition, representatives from a broad spectrum of regional transportation providers are included, embracing representatives from organizations such as the Richmond Metropolitan Authority, the Port of Richmond, the Capital Region Airport Commission, GRTC Transit System, RideFinders and others. Representatives from the Federal Highway Administration, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Virginia Department of Transportation also are included.

Periodic meetings of the LRTP Advisory Committee will be held during the upcoming year to review and provide input for the update to the LRTP. RRPDC staff is currently detailing the project scope and schedule for the update, as we strive toward the April 2008 completion date.

Included in the process will be general public meetings to provide input for the LRTP, held at convenient and accessible locations in the region. Information relating

to the LRTP update, the advisory committee meetings and public meetings will be posted on the RRPDC web site at [www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org).

For additional information, contact Lee Yolton at 804.323.2033 or at [lyolton@richmondregional.org](mailto:lyolton@richmondregional.org).

## Richmond Area Experiences Philly

Approximately 15 of the area's planners and elected officials visited Philadelphia, which hosted the 99th American Planning Association's National Planning Conference, April 14-18, 2007, offering over 200 conference sessions, mobile workshops, training seminars and networking opportunities.



Topics of discussion included Transfer of Development Rights, Health, Energy, Affordable Housing, New Urbanism and Economics. The livability of cities was high on the topic list for the conference, with many sessions focusing on the urban form.

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. named one of Time magazine's "Heroes for the Planet," was the keynote speaker for the event; he spoke on the state of the environment and remarked that the most important environmental issue in the U.S is rebuilding our cities. For additional information on the conference, access [www.planningpa.org/events\\_conference.shtml](http://www.planningpa.org/events_conference.shtml).

The 100th APA Conference in 2008 will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada April 27 - May 1.

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# What's Happening in Our Capital Region

## VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE



### Legislatively Speaking—2007

As the end of the General Assembly Session drew near, it was unclear how transportation would unfold. But, HB 3202 was passed by both chambers and made its way to the Governor for his amendments where he made significant changes, including provisions to reduce the annual general fund commitment for transportation while increasing funding for transit and rail capital projects. Of main consequence to our localities are two provisions within the transportation bill dealing with land use:

1. Urban developments areas (UDAs)—this language will require many of our region's localities to set aside UDAs to accommodate higher density development. Priorities should be placed on open space, walking trails, access to public transportation and commercial development and allow for residential densities of four units/acre. The UDAs must also be able to accommodate between 10-20 years of growth.

2. Urban transportation service districts (UTSD)—counties in our region with a population of more than 90,000 will have the authority to establish "service districts." They would receive the VDOT urban allocation for road maintenance for assuming the road maintenance responsibilities in the districts. The locality may impose an additional real estate tax within the district for that service along with impact fees for transportation facilities.

Other bills of interest to our localities include:

**HB 2954** (Bell)/**SB 781** (Cuccinelli)/**SB 1296** (Norment) restrict condemnation authority over blighted property. This legislation stems from the *Kelo v New*

London CT Supreme Court case which spurred anti- eminent domain sentiment throughout the United States.

**HB 1778** (Cosgrove)/**SB 829** (Davis) grant localities the authority to install photo-monitoring devices at one intersection for every 10,000 residents.

**SB 1063** (Rerras) increases from 7 to 30 days the minimum notice that a locality must give the public of a public hearing in which the locality proposes to increase its total real estate tax levies more than 101 percent of the prior year's tax levies, and requires that the notice be posted in the building where the governing body of the locality ordinarily meets, as well as in a newspaper.

In another budget-related bill, **HB 2676** (Ware, O.) modifies the existing requirements for advertising and holding a public hearing when a locality amends its budget. Such requirements will apply to any amendment that exceeds one percent of the total expenditures shown in the current budget. Currently, the requirements apply if the amendment exceeds one percent or \$500,000, whichever is less.

Legislation of interest to our localities which did not pass:

**HB 2128** (Hugo) would have provided for the relocation of a billboard if the land on which it is situated is acquired due to eminent domain was vetoed by the governor.

A bill which would have been a significant blow to our localities if it had passed is **HB 3109** (Janis) which would have forbid a locality from prohibiting hunting within a half-mile radius of a subdivision. After much effort, the bill failed on the Senate floor.

**HB 1979** (Lohr/Landes) extending from 2010 to 2020 the temporary restriction on city annexation authority, the granting of city charters and county immunity proceedings was vetoed by the governor.

The final legislative report, *The Yeas and Nays Report*, highlighting legislation of interest to our localities can be accessed from the RRPDC web site. For additional information, contact Patricia Villa at 804.323.2033 or at [pvilla@richmondregional.org](mailto:pvilla@richmondregional.org).

3069 bills were introduced during the 2007 General Assembly session.  
Out of these, 1869 failed, 948 passed and 12 were vetoed.

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# Getting Around in Our Capital Region

## Increasing Public Participation

New federal transportation planning regulations require that the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) includes revised public participation guidelines.

To comply with this, the Richmond Area MPO revised its guidelines, and a more comprehensive “Public Participation Plan” is the result. This plan will be incorporated as one of the many elements that comprise the updated LRTP for the Richmond area (*see related story, page 4*).

Although the Richmond Area MPO has always conducted its transportation planning activities under a set of public participation guidelines, new federal legislation adopted by Congress in August 2005 (SAFETEA-LU: Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) modified and emphasized certain aspects of public participation. As a result, a few changes became necessary to the existing public participation guidelines, which will now be referred to as a “Public Participation Plan.”

The Public Participation Plan addresses such things as advertising and notification for draft plans and programs, conducting convenient and accessible public meetings and consultation and coordination with resource agencies. Interested parties such as advocates for specialized transportation services for the elderly and disabled, bicycling/pedestrian organizations, public transportation providers, freight carriers and others were consulted during the development of the Public Participation Plan draft.

In accordance with federal requirements, the draft Public Participation Plan was advertised and posted for a 45-day period on the RRPDC web site in order to receive public input (from February 13 to April 4, 2007).

Comments received during the 45-day notification period were compiled and reported to the MPO. At its meeting on April 12, 2007, the MPO considered the public input and adopted the Public Participation Plan as an essential element of the LRTP.

The newly adopted Public Participation Plan sets forth the process to be used in conducting transportation planning for the Richmond metropolitan area. The Public Participation Plan is posted on the RRPDC web site at [www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org).

Contact Lee Yolton at 804.323.2033 or at [lyolton@richmondregional.org](mailto:lyolton@richmondregional.org) for more information.

## Rural Long-Range Transportation Planning

*(Continued from Page 4.)*

The map on page 4 shows the location of the rural study area as well as MPO study areas for the Richmond Area, Tri-Cities and part of Hampton Roads.

This year the RRPDC will complete basic data collection of the existing transportation network, transit services and socioeconomic information in the rural study area. In addition, RRPDC staff is working with the Rural Technical Advisory Committee (TAC; made up of local planners and representatives from the state’s transportation agencies) to create a public involvement plan to obtain input from the region’s residents.

Beginning this summer, the RRPDC staff under the direction of the Rural TAC will identify problem areas outside of the MPO study area, look at mobility issues associated with bicycle and pedestrian transportation and consider barriers to public transportation for low income, senior and disabled persons.

Identifying the transportation needs and inadequacies along the edges of the Richmond region through public participation will be an important part of the rural long-range transportation plan; the result of the efforts will be an adopted rural regional long-range transportation plan for our region.

For additional information on this project, contact Sarah Weisiger at the RRPDC at 804.323.2033 or at [sweisiger@richmondregional.org](mailto:sweisiger@richmondregional.org).

Hours at the Richmond Regional PDC are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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# Getting Around in Our Capital Region

## 2031 Long-Range Transportation Plan

*(Continued from Page 4.)*

amount of funding available from all sources, including local bond issues. The list of proposed transportation improvements is then matched against the estimate of available funds to create a final, “financially constrained” LRTP.

The horizon year for the next LRTP update is 2031; however, under federal regulations the LRTP must be updated every four years, so this allows for an ongoing, periodic process of revising funding estimates and matching them with proposed transportation improvements for the region.

In addition, the LRTP can be amended at any time to account for new/modified transportation projects and funding sources. The entire array of proposed projects contained in the LRTP is evaluated by computer models to ensure that, when implemented, these projects do not deteriorate the region’s air quality below accepted standards adopted for this area.

The current (2026) Long-Range Transportation Plan can be accessed on the RRPDC web site.

The 2031 LRTP is anticipated to be adopted by the MPO in April 2008. Public participation in this effort is encouraged, and in addition to forming a joint technical/citizens advisory committee (see article, *Public Participation*), general public meetings will be scheduled to obtain views and recommendations from citizens and information will be posted on the RRPDC web site at [www.richmondregional.org](http://www.richmondregional.org) as the process advances.

For answers to questions or additional information concerning the LRTP, please contact Lee Yolton, LRTP project manager at 804.323.2033 or by e-mail at [lyolton@richmondregional.org](mailto:lyolton@richmondregional.org).

### ***Just a reminder...***

*As of June 1, the Richmond Regional PDC’s address, telephone number and fax number will change. However, the web site address will remain the same.*

## Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

9211 Forest Hill Avenue, Suite 200  
Richmond, VA 23235-6874

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