HAMPTON ROADS REVIEW

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE HAMPTON ROADS PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION • Fall '08

In this issue:

EM Staff gets National Recognition

HR3 Mini-Grants Honor Regional Efforts

Econ Staff Analysis of Local Housing Trends

HAMPTON ROADS
PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

The Hampton Roads Review is published quarterly and is available at no cost. The HRPDC is a voluntary association of sixteen local governments. The purpose of the HRPDC is to provide a forum for local governments to address issues of regional importance and to encourage regional cooperation and coordination. For more information contact the HRPDC at 757.420.8300 or visit our website at www.hrpdcva.gov.

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The Hampton Roads Review, a quarterly publication of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program and local area governments.

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Message from the Executive Director

It is my pleasure to present the Fall 2008 edition of *The Hampton Roads Review. The Review* has always been the source for information regarding the activities of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC).

The HRPDC continues its tradition as a technical resource for local projects and studies. The HRPDC services include analysis of projects in stormwater, water supply and water quality management that cross jurisdictional boundaries. As a growing region of 1.6 million people, our localities are also concerned with how to handle our solid waste in a cost effective, environmentally responsible manner. The HRPDC is working with the Chief Administrative Officers from Southside Hampton Roads and consultants to address waste management for the future, as local waste management contracts with the Southeastern Public Service Authority (SPSA) expire in 2018. In addition, Southampton County and the town of Windsor utilized the HRPDC's planning talent to develop a county-wide park and recreation plan and a Comprehensive Plan update, respectively.

The HRPDC, and Hampton Roads as a region, is fortunate to have highly skilled emergency management planners working to ensure that well-conceived and exercised plans are in place should catastrophic events such as hurricanes, flooding, or terrorist activities strike the region. These planners are learning from similar such events around the country and working with the local first responders to ensure potential tragedies are minimized, like addressing how to identify, shelter, or move Hampton Roads' special needs population.

Finally, Hampton Roads has unique assets available that can make this region a competitive major metropolitan region in the world market. The Hampton Roads harbor is the world's best natural harbor and the employment opportunities it provides via the defense and port industries, offer a stabilizing force for the region's economy in these tough economic times. The Port of Hampton Roads is the third largest on the East Coast with the potential to be number one. We have a growing and diverse population which contributes to a workforce that is skilled in state of the art technologies such as modeling and simulation capabilities. Regional assets that position Hampton Roads as a national and international competitor include:

- Geographically located within two days of two-thirds of the U.S. population.
- Served by two Class I railroads, one of which is headquartered in the region.
- Direct interstate access, four feeder interstate highways, and six major state arterial highways.
- State of the art distribution centers throughout the region.

I believe the region can capitalize on these assets and develop future strategies that make Hampton Roads a thriving community and a world class economic market.

Dwight L. Farmer
Executive Director HRMPO

Hampton Roads Inmate Evacuation Planning

As part of a regional effort, the HRPDC has been assisting the Hampton Roads Inmate Evacuation Planning workgroup with the development of a regional plan for inmate evacuations. The group, comprised of representatives from sheriff's departments and correctional institutions throughout the region, is focusing on facilitating a safe and efficient evacuation of the Hampton Roads inmate population during a local emergency and/or regional disaster. Using a regional approach, the group is working to synchronize efforts as previous disasters have shown the need for jail evacuations within the region for the safety of the inmates and personnel.

To achieve their goals, the group has assigned a subcommittee to develop an all hazards evacuation plan entitled the "Tidewater Region Inmate Evacuation Plan." Sections within the plan include topics such as evacuation operations, chain of command, and communication. In addition to the evacuation plan, the subcommittee is developing a pre-scripted Emergency Management Assistance Compact which can be used to request additional resources from other states in the event regional resources are exceeded during a large scale disaster. Ongoing efforts include encouraging jails throughout the region to collaborate with their local emergency managers and establishing Memoranda of Understanding for bed space, transportation and other resources that may be needed in the event of an evacuation.

The most recent inmate evacuation planning meeting held on June 25, 2008, was hosted at the Commonwealth's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Richmond, VA. The meeting included a tour of the EOC and an explanation of the state's role in disaster response. Upcoming events include a one-day Jail and Evacuation Planning workshop for both correctional and emergency management personnel throughout the region. The workshop will be funded by the Department of Homeland Security and facilitated by the National Sheriffs' Association. Additional information for this event will be announced in November and will be posted on the HRPDC website.

HRPDC EM Planners Published in National Magazine

Regional Emergency Management Planners Natalie Easterday and Robert Lawrence coauthored "Meeting Public Expectations with Lane Reversal" which appeared in the August 2008 issue of *The PA Times*. The article provides a general overview of lane reversal operations and demonstrates how public expectations of emergency management have evolved with the use of lane reversal. *The PA Times* is a monthly newspaper published by the American Society for Public Administration and presents issues affecting public managers.

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION VOL. 31 NO. 8 AUGUST 2008

INSIDE:

PA TIMES

A Powerful Voice for Public Service . . .

31 Years • 1977-2008

State Budget Cuts May Lie Ahead

Tax Revenues Across U.S. Weaken Yet Again

Albany, NY–The Rockefeller Institute of Government's latest quarterly report on state tax revenues across the country shows continued weakening during the first quarter of 2008, with an increase of only 1.7 percent compared to the same quarter a year earlier, the slowest growth rate since 2003.

When adjusted for inflation in the cost of government purchases as well as legislated tax changes, state tax revenues declined by 5.3 percent–the third quarter in a row that total adjusted state revenues showed a decline. In addition, for the first time in six years, sales tax collections–one of the largest components of state tax revenues–were flat, showing no growth. Over the past 37 quarters, sales tax collections on average grew 4.4 percent year-over-year.

Total growth in state tax revenue was barely one-third the historical average over the previous nine years of 4.9 percent. Fifteen states saw revenue declines during the quarter, compared to the same quarter a year earlier.

"To date, the tax revenue weakness has been mild when compared with past recessions," said Rockefeller Institute Senior Fellow and study co-author Don Boyd. "However, the seeds of greater fiscal stress are already sown–economic weakness is spreading rapidly and tax revenue from the continuing base should be very weak in the April-June quarter, although perhaps partially masked by payments with 2007 tax returns.

"After June, tax revenue is likely to be extremely weak as most states begin their fiscal years–and such weakness may linger as the year progresses. Many states finalized their 2008-09 budgets during the April-June quarter, when conditions only have eroded

See BUDGET CUTS, pg. 2

ASPA and The Public Manager Host Conference for Practitioners

Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon addresses attendees of ASPA and The Public Manager's inaugural conference for practitioners. Hundreds of participants toured and for two days of engaging sessions, workshops and networking. Look for a full report in your September PA TIMES.

Survey Asks American Workers, Ages 44-70, About Longer Working Lives

Findings Indicate Millions Now Work in 'Encore Careers' Combining Money, Meaning and Social Impact

Washington, DC–A survey released today provides clues to a question with major implications for the American economy and the lives of millions: What will 78 million baby boomers do as they continue to work into traditional retirement age? The question was explored recently with more than 3,500 people between the ages of 44 and 70.

The 2008 "MetLife Foundation/Civic Ventures Encore Career Survey," conducted by Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., estimates that between 5.3 and 8.4 million Americans have already launched "encore careers," positions that combine income and personal meaning with social impact.

As promising as this finding is for individuals and society, the potential is even greater. Of those workers ages 44-70 not already in encore careers, half are interested in them, specifically jobs in education, health care and the nonprofit sector. And those experiences most interested in social purpose careers tend to be the youngest: 59 percent of boomers ages 44-50 say they want to join the 7 percent of their group already in such careers.

See ENCORE CAREERS, Pg. 12

Seoul and NY Top Rankings in Municipal E-Governance

Rutgers - SKKU Global E-Governance Survey Ranks Seoul #1

Newark, NJ–A global survey of city websites has identified Seoul, South Korea as the top-ranked city in the performance of municipal e-governance. The research study was conducted jointly by the E-governance Institute, School of Public Affairs and Administration, Rutgers University-Newark and the Global e-Policy e-Government Institute, Sungkyunkwan University, Korea.

The survey evaluated websites of municipalities worldwide in terms of privacy, usability, content, service, and citizen participation and ranked the cities on a global scale. This study was co-sponsored by the UN Division for Public Administration and Development Management and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA).

Governments across the world are increasingly offering their services online, broadly

See E-GOVERNANCE, Pg. 2

Nominate a deserving public servant for one of ASPA's many awards. See page 26 for more information.

For more information on how to be published in PA TIMES, please contact Christine Jerard McCrohan at Cmccrohan@aspanet.org

UASI Update

The HRPDC serves as the fiduciary agent for the region's Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant funding. The UASI grant is administered by the Department of Homeland Security in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and addresses unique multi-disciplinary planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercise needs of high-threat, high-density urban areas, and assists them in building and sustaining capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from threats or acts of terrorism. The UASI program provides funding to high-risk urban areas based on risk and effectiveness. The eligible candidates have been grouped into two tiers according to relative risk. Tier I includes the seven highest risk areas; Tier II includes the other 53 candidate areas. Hampton Roads is a Tier II region.

The UASI program began in 2003. Hampton Roads became an eligible high-risk urban area in 2007. Originally, five core cities: Norfolk, Newport News, Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, and Hampton composed the "Norfolk Urban Area." However, the Chief Administrative Officers of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) agreed to apply UASI funds to all 16 jurisdictions. In 2007, Hampton Roads was awarded $8,000,000 for seven critical projects.

Projects approved in the FY07 award included:

- Regional Security and Preparedness Enhancements for Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and Williamsburg Area Transport (WAT).
- Protective Equipment Enhancement Program for Explosive Ordinance and Disposal (EOD) personal to support the response to a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or {high-yield} explosive (CBRNE) incident in the Hampton Roads region by providing personal protection equipment (PPE) to first responders.
- Expand and Enhance Interoperable Voice and Data Communications to further the region's ability to communicate across jurisdictional and agency lines during all types of events enhancing interoperability at all levels.
- Virginia Fusion Center Information/Intelligence Sharing.
- Expanding and Enhancing Special Needs and Mass Evacuation Regional Capabilities.
- A Maritime Security and Response collaborative initiative between the Hampton Roads and Baltimore Urban Areas with the goal of enhancing plans for security and trade resumption for the ports, Chesapeake Bay and adjacent waterways.
- Multi-Urban-Area Intelligence and Information Sharing - The Hampton Roads, National Capital Region and Baltimore Urban Areas are taking the step of linking together their agencies' law enforcement databases to create a single source for law enforcement information and research.

For fiscal year '08, the Hampton Roads UASI was awarded $7,760,000 despite the addition of 14 new urban areas eligible to receive UASI funds nationally. The projects that will be funded with this new award are currently being reviewed by the Urban Area Work Group to ensure those selected will meet the regional needs based on the Homeland Security Strategy for Hampton Roads.

For more information on the UASI program please contact the HRPDC or visit the HRPDC website: http://www.hrpdcva.gov/EMERMGMT/EM_UASI.asp

Expanding and Enhancing Special Needs

The identification and planning for special needs populations continues to be a challenge for the Hampton Roads region. With the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) funding received in FY07, the HRPDC provided regional emergency planners resources to find and implement solutions to meet the needs of our diverse localities and populations.

Identification is a critical first step in addressing preparedness strategies, risk management, and response goals. The HRPDC supports this project with a Special Needs Planner who works extensively with the subcommittees developing tools to implement methods for a data collection effort and assessment of populations. These tools will provide regional planners with an accurate picture of the specified population and provide a database which will have to be maintained and updated on a regular basis—a complex task. By filling information gaps about these segments of the population, regional emergency management planners can create more comprehensive plans and educational initiatives.

More work is still needed within Hampton Roads as this initiative begins its first year. In order to make effective use of the data compiled for special needs populations, emergency management officials needed a way to examine data received in a usable form in the preparation, response and recovery aspect of a disaster. The purchase of WebEOC® for localities' emergency operations centers (EOC) was added to the special needs project. This web-based application allows emergency management officials to view information for those known special needs populations within their respective locality. This also allows for regional coordination of special needs if shortfalls are identified in any locality and/or if operations need to be shifted to another locality due to the nature of the disaster or event. Expanding the use of WebEOC® throughout Hampton Roads strengthens regional collaboration and provides for a standardized platform and system for all EOCs.

Accurate knowledge of the gaps in the readiness of our citizens is imperative in preparing our citizens to prevent, respond to, and recover from disasters. In order to have effective disaster plans, emergency management officials need to know where our special needs populations are located, what their more specific needs are, and how to utilize resources to assist them with both preparation and response. The more planning our regional emergency management officials can do BEFORE an event, the better prepared Hampton Roads will be to respond and recover from an event.

For more information visit the HRPDC website: http://www.hrpdcva.gov/EMERMGMT/EM_MedSpecialNeeds.asp

Solid Waste Plan 2018

In the mid 1970s, the Southside Hampton Roads Region faced a major issue with solid waste disposal – aging facilities that did not comply with new environmental standards, inadequate landfill capacity and rising costs. The region's leaders had the foresight to address the solid waste disposal capacity and the associated quality of life issues in a proactive and cooperative fashion. In 1976, the eight localities created the Southeastern Public Service Authority of Virginia (SPSA) and charged it with development and implementation of a comprehensive solid waste management system.

Over the ensuing decades, SPSA has developed that comprehensive waste management system, including a regional landfill, a waste processing plant to produce refuse-derived fuel, and a power plant to produce steam and electricity for sale to the U.S. Navy at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Related facilities and programs include a regional system of transfer stations, recycling programs, household hazardous waste collection and disposal, and yard waste management. The system is supported by Contracts for Use and Support between SPSA and the eight localities as well as program specific revenue streams. The basic contracts expire in 2018.

Looking to the future, the region's localities requested the HRPDC to facilitate a study of the region's long-term waste management options for the period after 2018. The HRPDC retained a consultant firm, SCS Engineers, to assist in this effort and convened an advisory committee consisting of the Chief Administrative Officers and appropriate technical staff from each of the eight affected localities.

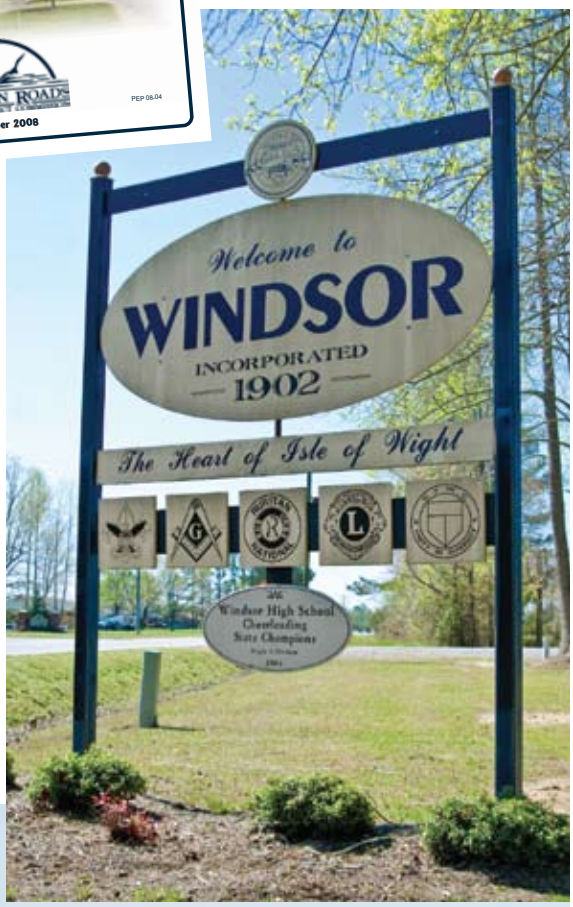
The consultant has examined the future solid waste disposal needs of the region and is developing options for management of the region's solid waste after 2018. These options include existing as well as emerging technologies for waste reduction, disposal and potential recycling and reuse. Institutional and financial experience in managing solid waste in a regional setting from throughout the country was examined and its applicability to Southside Hampton Roads has been evaluated.

The Advisory Committee is now considering the results of the consultant's technical studies and financial modeling of a range of institutional and technical options for managing the region's waste. Based on its analysis of this information, the advisory committee will refine the consultant's recommendations on how the region should proceed with waste management after 2018. Decisions will need to be completed soon, because of the lengthy timeline necessary to plan, permit and develop new waste management facilities and associated decisions. This study and recommendations are scheduled to be in a draft report by the end of the year.

Windsor Comprehensive Planning Update Completed

Over the past year, HRPDC has assisted the town of Windsor with the task of updating its comprehensive plan. The HRPDC provided analysis of current and future conditions of the Town's population, housing market, transportation system, economy, and environment. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan, now complete, projects the impacts of growth and development, provides local perspective on future land use and community goals, and includes comparisons to national, state and regional statistics. The update found that the Town can expect a 54% population increase over the next twenty-five years, and that commercial development is poised to be one of the biggest influences on the growth of the Town.

The Windsor Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the Windsor Town Council on September 9, 2008. Although Windsor's plan is now complete, HRPDC staff will continue to work with the Town in developing a stormwater management program. The HRPDC staff is available to assist other Hampton Roads localities with comprehensive planning and related studies



Physical Planning

Virginia Stormwater Management Regulations

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board met on September 24th to discuss promulgation of revised stormwater regulations and associated permits. The Board voted unanimously to move the regulations forward despite objections of untested technical criteria and incomplete technical specifications. Higher fees, increases in Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) staffing and the lack of a complete economic analysis were among other objections. DCR Director Joe Maroon pledged to "pull the regulations if there are this many concerns when they come before the Board for approval next year."

The year-long process laid out by DCR staff includes a forthcoming economic analysis performed by Virginia Tech. Private sector opponents urged staff to conduct a feasibility analysis on recently completed or approved development projects using the new criteria. The James River Association has commissioned a study to do just that. Williamsburg Environmental Group is doing the work. Other consultants and builders' associations are considering conducting similar studies of their own.

Administrative review of the regulations could go on through April of 2009, with a 60-day public comment period to follow. Refinements based on those comments and EPA review follow, with the final regulations coming back to the Board in September of 2009. If approved, the regulations must go through review by the Department of Policy and Budget, becoming effective December of 2009 at the earliest.

Global issues of concern, both in Hampton Roads and statewide, include the need for completion of the necessary implementation tools such as associated design criteria, updated Virginia Stormwater Management Program Handbook, and the web-based clearinghouse. Clearly without these, a true economic impact analysis of the regulations cannot be completed. As a side note, it should be recognized that while there was a high level of involvement by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), it was a DCR staff decision to move the regulations forward. This momentum should not be interpreted as endorsement by the TAC or true consensus on the regulatory requirements. Hence, the HRPDC staff and the Regional Stormwater Management Committee recommended pulling discussion of the regulations from the board's agenda until these critical components for program success are in place.

Southampton County Parks and Recreation Plan Nearing Completion

After completing *Vision 2020: The Southampton County Comprehensive Plan* in 2007, the County contracted with the HRPDC to produce its first parks and recreation plan. Over the past year, HRPDC staff has worked with county staff and the Southampton County Parks and Recreation Task Force to create a blueprint for the creation of a countywide parks and recreation program. Public meetings and windshield surveys were made a part of this effort to ensure accuracy of data and to reflect the wishes of the public. A telephone survey was also conducted in order to reach a wide cross section of residents and gauge their support of new initiatives and funding sources. The resulting recommendations are designed to guide the County over the long-term as the demand for parks and recreational programs grows.

Public hearings on the draft Southampton County Parks and Recreation Plan were held in September and October 2008. Adoption of the plan by the Board of Supervisors is expected in late October.

HR WET Trailer Update

There are a number of ways to save water and they all start with you! Water Use It Wisely

The Virginia Fall Classic Car and Bike Show will be the last opportunity to visit the HR WET Trailer in 2008. The Fall Classic takes place at Newport News City Park the weekend of October 24 -26. The HR WET Trailer will be at the event on October 25.

The HR WET trailer is stocked full of water conservation tools and tips that can help reduce indoor and outdoor water use. Stop by the trailer to learn more about water conservation and the steps you can take to reduce water consumption.

For more information about HR WET and the HR WET Trailer, go to: http://www.hrwet.org

For more information about the Virginia Fall Classic, go to: http://www.vafallclassic.org

Hampton Roads Environmental Education Committee Mini-Grant Awards

The education committees (HR CLEAN, HR STORM, and HR WET) of the HRPDC award mini-grants to qualifying projects. The mini-grants are intended to provide supplemental funding for environmentally related projects. For the first time, these committees have selected a Mini-Grant Project of the Year and an Honorable Mention. The awards recognize projects based on community involvement, creativity, impact on students, and other factors.

- **The 2008 Mini-Grant Project of the Year** was awarded to Thalia Elementary School in Virginia Beach for the Fifth Grade Oyster Gardeners Project. Patricia Sare coordinated the project. The project was funded by HR STORM. The students raised and planted nearly 1,400 oysters in the Lynnhaven River.
- **The Honorable Mention** was awarded to Jane H. Bryan Elementary School in Hampton for the First Grade Butterfly Garden Project. HR CLEAN funded this beautification project. Christine LaPointe coordinated the project.

The teachers who coordinated the projects were recognized and awarded plaques for their schools at the 2008 Hampton Roads Association of Environmental Educators (HRAEE) Annual Conference at the Virginia Aquarium on September 11.

The Mini-Grant Program and the Project of the Year Awards are funded through the HRPDC by the 16 Hampton Roads localities. The mini-grants will now be funded in amounts up to $500, although the committees have financed larger projects cooperatively. Schools, youth groups, scouting groups and other youth organizations may apply for a mini-grant at any of the committee websites:

HR CLEAN - www.hrclean.org • HR Storm - ww.hrstorm.org, or • HR WET - www.hrwet.org.

HRSTORM • HRWET • HRCLEAN

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TMDL Plans Nearing Completion

In April 2007, the HRPDC formalized a partnership with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to coordinate the development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) and Implementation Plans in Hampton Roads. Currently, the HRPDC staff, in cooperation with the affected localities, is developing Implementation Plans for bacteria impairments in Nanney Creek, Milldam Creek and Middle West Neck Creek in southern Virginia Beach, as well as the Back and Poquoson River watersheds on the Peninsula. These Plans are nearing completion and are expected to be released for public comment in the fall of 2008. Over the next two years, the HRPDC will develop at least three more Implementation Plans, coordinate outreach for the development of six TMDL studies, and coordinate the development of bacteria and PCB TMDLs for the Elizabeth River Watershed.

MOM Program Cuts Through the FOG

Local government and HRPDC staff have developed a model ordinance on management of fats, oils and grease (FOG), which will be released soon for adoption by participating localities. Related implementation guidance, in the form of regionally consistent enforcement management guidelines, training and certification processes are still under development by the subcommittee. Associated educational materials will be developed by a separate subcommittee. FOG management is a part of Management, Operations and Maintenance (MOM) planning for wastewater purveyors and is a requirement of the regional Special Order by Consent with the Department of Environmental Quality.

FOG accumulation in the sanitary sewer system is a particular problem that can be a symptom of misalignment or sags in the piping, as well as a cause of sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs). Overflows from the system are prohibited under the Clean Water Act. The region is working together on both technical and educational components to improve FOG programs, with the goal of eliminating FOG from the system. A new website, www.hrfog.org, will be launched by the end of the year.

APA OCT National Community Planning Month 2008

[GREEN COMMUNITIES]

HRPDC Celebrates National Community Planning Month

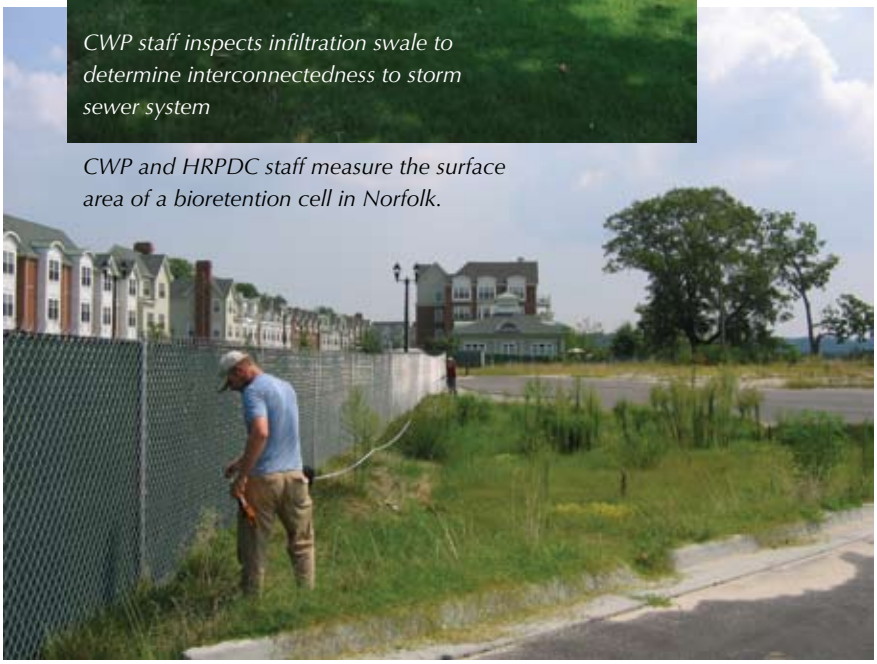
October is National Community Planning Month. Each year, the American Planning Association (APA) sponsors this program to raise awareness of the role that planners and planning play in communities across the U.S.

This year's National Community Planning Month theme, Green Communities, recognizes the role of planners in helping to ensure our communities are environmentally-friendly and sustainable. The theme emphasizes the role of planning in supporting the use of alternative energy sources, reduction of automobile dependence, and other green community issues. You're invited to celebrate how your town, neighborhood, or community already is, or working to become, a green community this October.

Extreme Best Management Practice (BMP) Field Surveys

CWP staff measures the area of pervious pavers at a site in Norfolk

CWP staff inspects infiltration swale to determine interconnectedness to storm sewer system



CWP and HRPDC staff measure the surface area of a bioretention cell in Norfolk.

In July 2007, the HRPDC entered into a contract with the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) to assist the Center with its Extreme BMP Makeover Project. The purpose of the project is to measure and track increased nutrient reduction by local communities at the site level through enhanced design of stormwater BMPs. Localities throughout the James River Basin, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and the James River Association are also partners in this project. Over the last several months, the HRPDC has provided BMP information for Hampton Roads localities to the CWP. In August, HRPDC and staff from Norfolk, Portsmouth and Hampton joined CWP staff in the field to survey 50 BMPs throughout Norfolk, Portsmouth and Hampton to determine how well they function in nutrient removal. This data will be analyzed with survey data from other localities within the James River Basin. Next steps include identifying and addressing the key programmatic issues that affect BMP performance.

Plastic Bag Coalition Completes Volunteer Action Plan

The Virginia Plastic Bag Coalition, spearheaded by the Virginia Retail Federation and Isle of Wight County, has been meeting since April to address problems created by plastic bags in the county and statewide. The coalition includes a variety of stakeholders from government agencies, agriculture, retailers, manufacturers and recyclers. Meetings have included speakers on a variety of topics, including representatives from: Progressive Bag Affiliates, Trex, Farm Fresh, DEQ and an overview of Virginia's Assign-a-Highway program for litter control.

The group, facilitated by Julia Hillegass, Senior Environmental Planner for HRPDC, has drafted a volunteer strategic plan. The plan includes pilot educational and marketing components for plastic bag recycling in Isle of Wight County, application for a state grant to provide enhanced recycling education and legislative initiatives. Coalition findings, as well as the work plan and recommendations have been submitted to legislators for consideration. Volunteers in the coalition will organize to start working on committees at their next meeting.

Legislative proposals by Delegate William K. Barlow and Senator Fred Quayle, as well as a variety of general statewide studies on solid waste, were the catalyst for the creation of this coalition focused on issues surrounding plastic bag litter. In 2008, SB 711 introduced by Senator Quayle and HB 1534 introduced by Delegate Barlow would authorize a locality to prohibit a retail merchant located within its jurisdiction from providing to its customers any plastic carryout bag (in which a product or products purchased from any such store is placed) unless the plastic carryout bag is a durable plastic bag, with handles, that is at least 2.25 millimeters thick and is specifically designed and manufactured for multiple reuse. The resolutions introduced are HJR 169, Delegate Barlow, and SJR 82, Senator Quayle, which request the Department of Environmental Quality to convene stakeholder meetings to discuss and report on potential legislative actions that would mitigate the negative effects of improperly disposed of plastic bags on the Commonwealth's environment. Stakeholders shall include representatives of agriculture, conservation, local government, manufacturing, plastics industry, timber industry and retailers. In the selection of feasible policies, the stakeholders shall review existing policies and programs adopted in the United States and other countries. In conjunction with Resolution SJR 82 and HJR 169, several studies are being conducted on the issue:

- Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) is conducting a broad national and international waste industry review and study that includes plastic bags.
- Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is conducting a review of SB 711. DEQ's report to the Senate Committee on Local Government is due by November 1, 2008.

A Population Change in Hampton Roads?

Two widely used sources for population estimates in Hampton Roads, the Weldon Cooper Center and the U.S. Census Bureau, have begun moving in opposite directions. The Weldon Cooper Center estimates that the population of Hampton Roads has continued to grow at a steady rate, while the Census Bureau indicates that there are wider swings in the region's population growth, including a 2,196 population decline in 2007. Their numbers tell slightly different stories because of the different methodologies employed by each group.

The Census conducts the decennial Census to gain an accurate population count (as mandated by the Constitution), and in the intervening years it employs a model that factors in the births, deaths, and migration from each locality to estimate total population. Births and deaths are fairly accurate numbers, but the migration numbers are derived through Internal Revenue Service (IRS) filings, which may not include key segments of the population. The HRPDC recently compared the 2000 decennial Census to the 2000 IRS returns, and found that the IRS data only accounted for 79.1% of the Hampton Roads population; this forces the Census Bureau to project the movement of this uncounted portion.

The Weldon Cooper Center also indexes its population estimates to the decennial Census (to estimate the population of each locality), but uses five measures to estimate the percentage change in the locality's population: school enrollment, driver licenses, housing stock, births and tax records. The Weldon Cooper estimates use the Census projections for the State population as a base, and then use their methodology to estimate the share of the total state population that they need to allocate to a particular locality.

While the overall trend for Hampton Roads has been relatively slow population growth, the distribution of the population within the region has continued to shift. Chesapeake, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach have experienced 69% of the region's population growth since 1990, and the Forecast 2034 produced by the HRPDC predicts that Chesapeake, James City, and Suffolk will gain an ever increasing share of the region's population.

IRS data is very useful to understand basic population flows, especially the flow of workers between localities. Between 2005 and 2006, a net of 10,000 individuals have moved from Virginia Beach and Norfolk to other localities within Hampton Roads while Suffolk and Chesapeake received a net of 10,000 migrants from the other localities during the same time frame. While this covers the impact to the population count, there is a much higher level of migration and population turnover that occurs yearly, and which is not indicated in basic population estimates. One example of this is Chesapeake regional migration between 2004 and 2005. For this one year period, IRS records showed that 10,838 moved to Chesapeake from other Hampton Roads localities and 8,444 moved from Chesapeake to other Hampton Roads localities, and this is just migration within the region; overall, Chesapeake saw 18,031 immigrate and 15,268 emigrate between 2004 and 2005. This high level of population turnover makes it difficult to compare population characteristics between years, e.g., measuring the quality of education provided by schools when you have a different set of students from year to year.

Housing Market in Hampton Roads

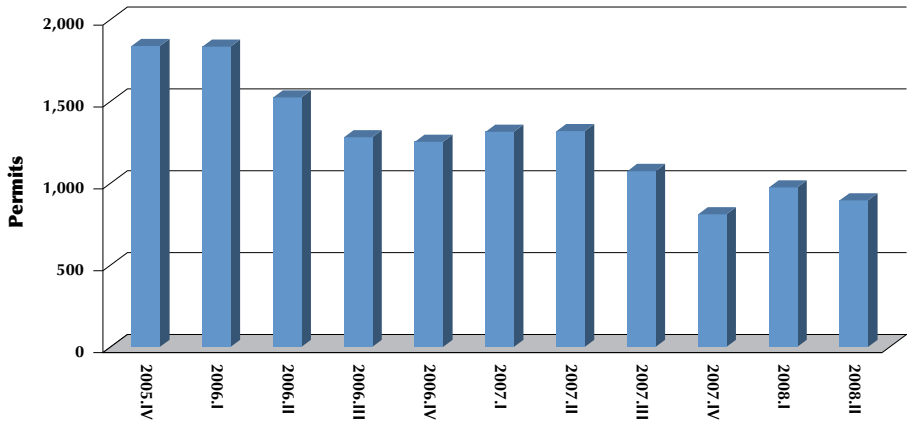
The housing market drives the economy in the United States and Hampton Roads with repercussions on employment, personal finances, and business development. The Hampton Roads housing market continues to outperform the national market, with home prices in the region rising 9.8% between the fourth quarters of 2005 and 2007 compared to an 8.1% decrease in national prices. Despite the resilience of the region's housing market, understanding the housing crisis in both its national and local forms is critical because of the serious threat it poses to regional growth.

Fewer housing permits and starts indicate weakness in both the construction industry and in the myriad of industries that support and market to the construction industry. Construction employment has declined, and this puts pressure on workers, who already are suffering from other issues related to the economic slowdown (inflation, falling home prices, etc.). Banks and financial institutions are also encountering lean times, leading to less credit for local businesses and a lower level of hiring.

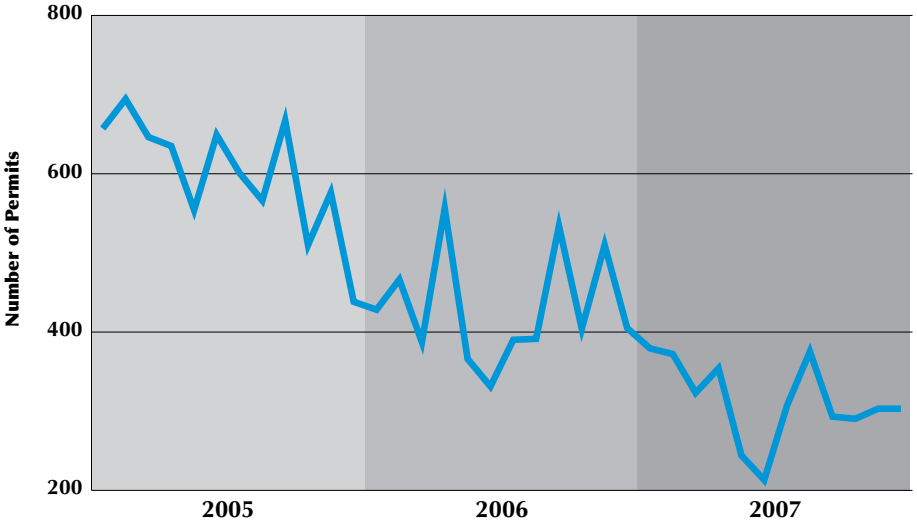
New homebuyers are finding themselves unable to purchase homes, partly because of prices that have not adjusted to market conditions, and partly because of mortgage financing is increasingly difficult to access. This has implications for the workforce, making it more difficult and expensive to live in Hampton Roads. When they are able to obtain mortgages, potential homeowners are paying higher interest rates and fees than before the credit crunch. Current homeowners are also feeling pinched, because the slow housing market removes their flexibility to easily sell their homes and relocate within the region.

Lastly, the housing crisis creates issues for local governments. One aspect is the falling revenues due to assessments that are stagnant, or in some cases falling, and this creates a particularly difficult situation where the real estate tax rate has recently been decreased. Also, families that have encountered financial difficulties because of the housing crisis will draw on government services at a higher rate, including efforts to combat blight as a result of unoccupied housing.

Single Unit Permits



Housing Permits: Single Family



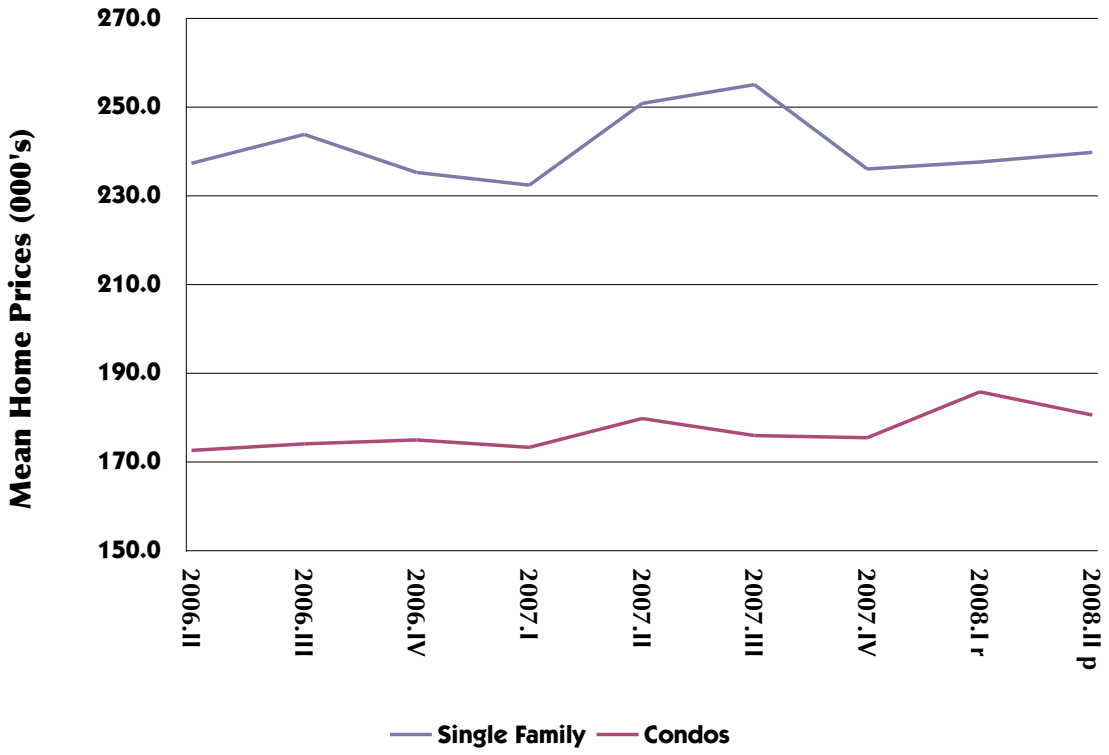
HRPDC Continues Local Analysis of National Economic Issues

The HRPDC continues to monitor and provide analysis on issues that impact the local economy. Currently, numerous challenges created by the national economy are having repercussions locally. Inflation continues to eat away at both consumers and producers, and the country is suffering symptoms consistent with the onset of stagflation-persistent inflation coupled with high unemployment. The housing market continues to put pressure on homeowners, especially those with bad mortgages, as well as those who need to move for work. Lenders who are holding a large number of delinquent mortgages are fighting the housing market as well. Despite the relative weakness of the dollar encouraging U.S. exports, the country continues to run a significant trade deficit, due largely to oil imports. Lastly, consumer confidence is at an all time low, leading to both weak retail sales and overly conservative saving. Despite these issues with the national economy, the HRPDC predicts that Hampton Roads' economy will not reach the negative extremes experienced by other regions around the country.

The Hampton Roads housing market has slowed, but because of the region's strong employment base, has not resulted in large price declines as seen nationally. However, as residential construction slows, Hampton Roads has lost both jobs and taxes. National inflation has hurt regional retail sales, as consumers feel pinched by higher gasoline and food prices. Hampton Roads particularly feels the impact of higher gasoline prices through weaker tourist spending. Higher gas prices have squeezed vacations from family budgets, or resulted in the reallocating of money in the vacation budget to travel expenses, rather than dining out and longer trips.

Despite these challenges, there are two regional institutions that continue to provide economic stability to Hampton Roads. The Department of Defense spending continues to be a major force in the region, with military employment remaining stable and the shipyards busy with Navy contracts. Second, as a result of globalization and lower barriers to trade, the Port of Virginia continues to have high growth expectations. Trade has remained strong despite the economic downturn because the weakness of the dollar has encouraged exports, and high international energy demand continues to require coal. These stabilizing elements have allowed the region to maintain payroll growth and keep home prices in line with the market peak.

Mean Home Prices in Hampton Roads



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Mayor

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Member, City Council

Amar Dwarkanath
Deputy City Manager

Clifton Hayes Jr.
Member, City Council

William Harrell
City Manager

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June Fleming
Interim City Manager

Rosa Lawrence
Member, City Council

City of Hampton
Jesse Wallace Jr.
City Manager

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County Administrator

Thomas Shepperd Jr.
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

MEETING CALENDAR

Oct 15 HRPDC Annual Commission

held at: 11am-Noon, The Regional Board Room

Nov 19 HRPDC Executive Committee

held at: 11am-Noon, The Regional Board Room

Dec 17 HRPDC Executive Committee

held at: 11am-Noon, The Regional Board Room

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