

**SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE  
HRPDC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE  
DECEMBER 5, 2019**

**1. Summary of the November 7, 2019 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Regional Environmental Committee.**

There were no comments on the November meeting summary.

**2. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**3. Featured Stormwater Management Technique – Stormwater Utility Rates Based on Traffic Patterns**

Ms. Jill Sunderland, HRPDC Water Resources Planner, discussed alternative stormwater utility rate structures under consideration in the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Ft. Lauderdale has a near-term need for an additional \$200 million for drainage and flood protection improvements. The City evaluated options for recalculating stormwater rates that would raise additional revenue. After considering several alternatives, the City decided to include parcel trip generation, along with impervious area, in its rate structure with a goal to “equitably recover costs in proportion to the benefit that each property receives from the stormwater system”. The benefit associated with trip generation is passable roads. Under the proposed structure, rates will go up for all types of uses. However, rate increases are higher for more intense uses such as multi-family residential uses and retail commercial establishments. Committee members discussed the complexity of this type of rate structure, the resources needed to implement it, and the needs to educate the public on the rationale and impact of the changes. Potential implications discussed were expectations for more localized expenditure of revenue and effects on business attraction and retention.

**4. Virginia Offshore Wind Update**

Mr. Matt Smith, HRPDC Senior Regional Planner, provided an update on offshore wind development activities in Virginia. Topics discussed included the status of East Coast projects, economic opportunity related to the growth of the offshore wind industry, environmental benefits, and advantages Hampton Roads has in attracting components of the offshore wind supply chain. Mr. Smith also provided information on the status of the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project, which is expected to be completed in 2020, and the Virginia Commercial Offshore Wind project, which is projected to be the largest in the U.S. and come online between 2024 and 2026. A video was shown about Virginia’s offshore wind development efforts.

## **5. ConserveVirginia – Land Conservation Initiative and Tool**

Mr. Joe Weber with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Division of Natural Heritage provided information on the DCR programs ConservationVision and ConserveVirginia. These programs use statewide spatial data to support strategic conservation planning. ConservationVision is a digital atlas for green infrastructure planning. It consists of a suite of maps and spatial data, intended as a resource for guiding strategic conservation efforts. ConservationVision assesses land with regard to wildlife habitat, cultural assets, agriculture, forestry, recreation, wetlands, and vulnerability to development. ConserveVirginia is a tool to guide conservation investments, providing a map of Virginia's highest conservation value lands, based on 19 mapped data inputs. The ConserveVirginia map includes more than 6 million acres of lands representing top priority conservation values in the categories of agriculture and forestry, natural habitat, floodplains, cultural preservation, scenic preservation, and protected landscapes. Mr. Weber explained the components these tools and guided committee members through their use.

## **6. Norfolk Special Service Districts for Flood Mitigation**

Mr. Greg Patrick, Director of Budget and Strategic Planning for the City of Norfolk, discussed the City's new Special Service District (SSD) Policy. Mr. Patrick explained that SSDs are intended to deliver additional services to an area in exchange for a higher real property tax in the district eligible for the project. Projects enabled through the SSD are intended to be focused mainly around matters of coastal resilience. The SSD policy was implemented because the City does not have enough resources to address all coastal resilience needs. An SSD is an option for residents to fund projects that are not high citywide priorities. Mr. Patrick provided an outline of the SSD process including project concept, feasibility analysis, preliminary approval of residents, project development, final approval, and creation of the SSD by the City Council. An example project was discussed. While there has been interest from residents, there have been no petitions for the creation of an SSD yet. Discussion among committee members and initial takeaways from City included the importance of properly drawing district boundaries, concerns that the process may favor wealthy areas, and the impact on the City's formal process for establishing the priority of capital projects.

## **7. Other Matters**

There were no other matters.

The next meeting of the Regional Environmental Committee will be held at the HRPDC on February 6.