



## HRPDC HOUSING ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP

The Housing Assessment Working Group held its first meeting on January 31 at Heron's Landing in Chesapeake. The formation of this Working Group resulted from discussions at the October meeting of the Hampton Roads Planning Discussion Commission (HRPDC). These discussions focused on the advancement of a regional housing assessment that will evaluate and provide a gap analysis of programs and housing available in the region and provide guidance on ensuring the region has adequate housing for all.



The Working Group consists of 12 HRPDC members representing localities from across the region. At its first meeting, the Working Group shared information on housing challenges in each of their localities, reviewed the purpose and goals of the Working Group, discussed potential opportunities and received an overview on Heron's Landing and a tour of the facility from Virginia Supportive Housing. This is one of the first Single Residency Occupancy (SRO) housing units in Hampton Roads. The Working Group also discussed the importance of connecting conversations on housing and public transit, and agreed to schedule their next meeting as a joint session with the Regional Transit Advisory Panel.

## HAMPTON ROADS CAUCUS

On January 26, the Executive Director provided a presentation to the Hampton Roads Caucus on the HRPDC/HRTPO Regional Legislative Priorities. Staff continues to advocate for these priorities at the General Assembly and monitor bills and budget amendment proposals related to this regional legislative agenda.



## OUTDOOR RECREATION CAUCUS

On the evening of February 1, the Executive Director provided a briefing to the Outdoor Recreation Caucus in Richmond on the Birthplace of America Trail (BoAT) and the opportunities that this trail offers our region on both the Peninsula and Southside. A request was made that the BoAT/Capital Trail extension be considered as one of the "Big 4" trail opportunities in Virginia when State funding is considered. In addition, support was requested for a proposed budget amendment that would provide \$20 million towards construction of the BoAT/Capital Trail extension.



## **SOUTHSIDE NETWORK AUTHORITY (SNA)**

At the January 13 meeting of the SNA, the Board took action to enter into an Interim Agreement with Global Technical Systems (GTS) of Virginia Beach for the operation, maintenance and marketing of the regional connectivity ring. The regional connectivity ring is a 199-mile, 288-strand fiber-optic backbone network that is under construction and will connect the Southside Hampton Roads region.



Upon completion of the ring, GTS will lease 96 strands of the initial 288-strand ring and will provide maintenance and marketing services for the ring. The agreement includes leasing dark fiber to residential and business customers, regional institutional users, economic development and historically disadvantaged communities and revenue-sharing. GTS will receive the right to lease further strands from the SNA at defined prices and the exclusive right to market the ring for up to 60 months when performance goals for the system's buildout have been met.

The goal of this effort is to create a regional fiber network that will eventually connect the entire Hampton Roads region with the subsea cables that have come ashore in Virginia Beach. To further advance this effort, a federal funding request has been submitted to extend the Southside ring through the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel to begin to create a similar ring on the Peninsula, starting in the Cities of Hampton and Newport News. A decision on this federal grant is expected in February.

## **REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (RED) TEAM**

On February 2, the Executive Director and HRPDC Deputy Executive Director attended the RED team meeting that was hosted at the new offices of the Hampton Roads Alliance in downtown Norfolk. The Alliance convenes regular meetings of the region's economic development directors to coordinate and exchange information on regional economic development efforts. The Executive Director is included in these RED team meeting as a regional partner.

## **COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)**

The CAC held its regularly scheduled meeting on February 9 at the American Theatre in Hampton. Agenda items included the following:

- Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Update
- Hampton Roads Rail Crossing Study
- Hampton Roads Regional Safety Study

## **VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION OF PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSIONS (VAPDC) SUMMER CONFERENCE**

Mark your calendars!!! The VAPDC Summer Conference will be held at The Main in Downtown Norfolk from July 26 to July 28. The lineup of speakers and programs for this conference will be announced this spring.



## **VAPDC SESSION ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

On February 3, several HRPDC/HRTPO staff participated in a VAPDC Virtual Training opportunity on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The speaker and facilitator for this session was Sly Mata, the Director of Diversity Education in the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the University of Virginia.

## **OTHER MEETINGS & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OUTREACH**

- Attended the HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel and Budget Committee meeting on January 19
- Participated in a strategic planning session for the Virginia Association of Planning District Commission's (VAPDC) Board on January 20 in Richmond. The Executive Director is a member of the VAPDC Board.
- Participated in an exploratory conference call meeting on January 20 related to autonomous vehicles
- Attended the "Meet Mayor Phillip Jones" event in Newport News on January 24
- Attended a meeting in Richmond with Delegate Brewer, locality representatives and project partners on January 25 to discuss the VATI construction project in the City of Suffolk and Isle of Wight and Southampton Counties
- Participated in the Regional Roundtable meeting on January 27 that was hosted by the Hampton Roads Chamber
- Participated in the VAPDC Program Committee meeting on February 6
- Attended a Regional Energy Roadmap Steering Committee meeting on February 10
- Participated in the Southside Network Authority Board meeting on February 10
- Facilitated the Regional Connectors Study Policy and Working group joint meeting on February 13

## **ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT**

- Recruitment for vacant staff positions
- Advancement of projects and maintenance activities at the Regional Building
- Agency phone system upgrade
- Organization web site update/redesign
- Preliminary Budget preparation
- Financial and human resource management support for the HRPDC, HRTPO, HRTAC, HRMFFA and Southside Network Authority
- Fiscal and project management for the VATI Broadband Grant
- Personnel management