



## AskHRgreen

In early May, our locality partners launched a new cigarette litter initiative through our environmental education and outreach program, askHRgreen.org. Through the **#NoButtsAboutIt** promotion, larger-than-life size cigarette butt sculptures were placed in public spaces across the region along with signage communicating the facts about the prevalence and harmful impacts of cigarette litter. This awareness campaign is coupled with the launch of a new grant program to provide free cigarette waste receptacles to area businesses. The sculptures popped up across the region at parks, libraries, recreation centers, at the Zoo, the Aquarium, and other local attractions. The media took notice of this regional initiative and it has been featured in the news by The Virginian-Pilot, The Daily Press, WTKR, WVEC, Wavy, Yahoo News, and other local media outlets. Last week, our staff received an inquiry from an organization in Texas who is looking to emulate this program. We will share additional information on this effort during my report at the HRPDC meeting. I want to compliment Katie Cullipher and Rebekah Eastep from the HRPDC Environmental Education Team for their excellent work on this effort.



## CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS (CAO) COMMITTEE MEETING

The Chief Administrative Officers held their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on May 5. Agenda items included the following:

- A presentation by HRPDC Housing Administrator Shernita Bethea on housing efforts administered through the HRPDC, and background information on a potential regional grant opportunity that can aid localities in developing projects that create housing options for the region's workforce. This item will be presented to the HRPDC at its May 20 Commission meeting.
- A presentation by HRTPO Principal Transportation Planner John Mihaly on the HRTPO's Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) and the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ). Due to the amount of committed funding that is in place for projects to the year 2028, the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee is recommending that the 2021 application process for these programs be suspended.
- Updates on Items of Interest from each locality CAO
- Review of agenda items for the May 20 HRPDC meeting

## HRPDC/HRTPO PERSONNEL AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

The HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel and Budget Committee met on April 5 and April 19 to discuss and develop the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Budget for the HRPDC and HRTPO. This proposed budget will be presented to both Boards at their May 20 meetings with a recommendation for approval.



## REGIONAL FIBER RING

The Southside Network Authority Board held a meeting on April 9. The Authority Board is proceeding with two parallel paths for the financing and construction of the Southside fiber ring. The Authority is moving forward with a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a traditional locality-financed and private sector construction approach (with the operation, management and marketing provided by the private sector), as well as a turn-key public-private partnership for the financing and construction of the fiber ring. The Authority has budgeted for HRPDC staff support for this effort and the associated costs are reimbursed to the Commission. The next meeting of the Southside Network Authority will be held on May 14.

The HRPDC/HRTPO Executive Director is in discussions with Southside City Managers to determine if funds from the American Rescue Plan may be an option for financing the construction of the Southside fiber ring. In addition, the Authority's Executive Director held a meeting with Chief Information Officers from the Peninsula to begin discussions about the next phase of this regional fiber network which would involve a connection across the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel and Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnels and the design and construction of a similar ring connecting the Peninsula localities.

## VIRGINIA COASTAL RESILIENCE MASTER PLAN

HRPDC staff continue to participate in the process for the preparation of the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan. In addition to serving on the Technical Advisory Committee, staff is serving on a series of seven subcommittees that have been formed for this planning process. The HRPDC will receive a report on this planning effort at the May 20 Commission meeting. Members of the Hampton Roads Caucus will be invited to attend this meeting to receive the update/briefing.

## ROUTE 58 CORRIDOR AND REGIONAL GATEWAYS

The HRTPO staff and the HRTPO Chair continue to meet with locality partners in the Route 58 corridor to discuss existing challenges and needs. These discussions have generated a proposal to bundle a number of transportation mobility and safety projects into a package of projects that can be submitted for Smart Scale funding. The discussions have also resulted in a Regional Gateways Analysis that staff has proposed for inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2022 work program that will evaluate existing and future travel information and inform a prioritized strategy for improving connections to outside market areas. This item will be discussed at the HRTPO Board's May 20 meeting.

## REGIONAL TRANSIT ADVISORY PANEL

The Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) has appointed nine working groups around the following topic areas:

- Transit Oriented Development Along the 757 Express
- Affordable/Accessible Housing
- Bus Stop Amenities
- Transit Advocacy/Ambassadors
- Transit and the Military
- Serving Major Employment Centers
- Transit for the Williamsburg/Virginia Beach Tourism Corridor
- Technology
- Universities/Colleges



Each of these work groups have been asked to identify one to three actions that could be taken to advance public transportation in our region. The work groups have each held meetings over the past month and will report their recommendations to the full RTAP in late May/early June.

## **FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE PACKAGE**

The Executive Director has continued to collaborate with the Hampton Roads Infrastructure Coalition to position the region to take advantage of the anticipated Federal Infrastructure Program. This effort has continued to involve meetings and discussions with representatives of the region's federal delegation.

## **BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA TRAIL/CAPITAL TRAIL EXTENSION**

Staff continues to coordinate efforts to promote the advancement of the Birthplace of American Trail (BoAT)/Capital Trail extension. In collaboration with the City of Newport News, HRTPO staff prepared information for Congressman Bobby Scott, and a request for approximately \$4 million of federal money was requested to fund the construction of a segment of this trail within the Newport News City Park. In addition, the Executive Director has worked with VDOT and has successfully secured a VDOT on-call consultant and \$200,000 of resources for this effort. This on-call consultant will work with the HRTPO and Peninsula localities to refine the routing of the proposed trail and advance the design of specific trail segments to the point that they can be submitted as grant proposals for state and federal funding.

As part of community outreach for the BoAT/Capital Trail extension effort, the Executive Director provided a presentation to the Historic Triangle Bicycle Trail Advisory Committee on April 19. Meetings were also held with the Virginia Capital Trail Foundation on May 3 and the Tidewater Trail Alliance representatives on May 4.

## **OTHER MEETINGS/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR COMMUNITY OUTREACH MEETINGS**

The Executive Director has attended and provided presentations or participated in the following meetings over the past month:

- Portsmouth State of the City Address on April 16
- Suffolk State of the City Address on May 18
- Meetings of the 757 Recovery Plan Implementation Task Force
- Joint Meeting of Virginia Beach Vision and the Greater Norfolk Corporation to provide a presentation on the work of the HRPDC and HRTPO
- Offshore Wind Executive Committee meeting of April 27
- Meeting with Hampton Roads Chamber representatives on April 28 to discuss regional transportation plans and initiatives
- Eastern Virginia Industrial Facilities Act (EVRIFA) meeting on May 4
- Presentation to the Lead 757 Class as part of the program's Infrastructure Day on May 13
- Participation in a Solar Power Advisory Program Roundtable hosted by Mayor Kenneth Alexander on May 14
- Meetings of the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC) including Board, Executive Director and Program Committee meetings
- Meetings of the Regional Roundtable – a group of 12 regional organizations that meet on a weekly basis to share items of regional interest and promote collaboration



## **ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGEMENT**

The HRPDC/HRTPO Administrative Staff continues to advance work on the following items:

- COVID-19 Building Operations
- Staff support to the Personnel and Budget Committee
- Preparation of the FY2022 Budget and Work Program
- Preparation of a post-COVID telework policy and program
- Human Resource Management
- Civil Rights and Title VI work for the HRTPO and HRTAC through the Office of Community Affairs and Civil Rights
- Strategy for addressing Title VI and Civil Rights for HRPDC related program areas
- Procurement oversight
- Financial management support for the HRPDC, HRTPO, HRTAC, HRMFFA and Southside Network Authority
- IT management
- Computer replacement schedule/strategy
- Procurement process for evaluation of the Regional Board Room's audio-visual equipment