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**TO: HRPDC/HRTPO Boards**

**BY: Robert Crum, Executive Director**

**RE: Executive Director's Report – November 2020**

I am pleased to announce that Dr. Pavithra Parthasarathi will begin work as our next HRTPO Deputy Executive Director on December 16. Mike Kimbrel, who is retiring on December 31, will remain with our team until the end of the year, and we will take advantage of this overlap to have Mike assist Pavithra with her onboarding at the HRTPO. I want to thank Mike for his continued hard work on behalf of our region as he prepares for the next chapter.

If some of you find Pavithra's name familiar, it is because she was with the HRTPO from 2011 to 2013. Since then, she worked for CDM Smith in New Haven, Connecticut on the development of travel demand models, toll revenue forecasts, managed lanes, and project management. For the past five years, she has worked with the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) in Seattle, Washington. The Regional Council provides regional planning services for its region and also serves as the MPO for the Seattle area. Pavithra's experience in Seattle has included work related to Freight, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Performance Based Planning, Multi-Modal Transportation Planning, Financial Planning, and coordination of transportation planning efforts with PSRC's regional planning program. She holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in Civil Engineering with a minor in Urban and Regional Planning and is a licensed professional engineer in both Minnesota and Virginia. Pavithra is active in the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) and the Transportation Research Board (TRB) where she serves on the Committee on Urban Transportation Data and Information Systems and the Committee on Metropolitan Policy, Planning, and Processes.



We are excited about the expertise Dr. Parthasarathi brings to the region, and I look forward to welcoming her back to Hampton Roads and introducing her to our HRTPO Board.

On October 29, the Executive Director attended and participated in the ceremonial groundbreaking for the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel project that was held on Hampton University property in the City of Hampton.

On November 4, the HRPDC staff participated in a conference call with other coastal PDCs in Virginia to discuss the Coastal Resilience Master Plan Framework that was recently released by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Staff is scheduling a meeting of the HRPDC Coastal Resilience Subcommittee and the Chief Administrative Officer Committee to review this document and prepare comments for consideration by the HRPDC.

The Executive Director has coordinated efforts with Hampton Roads Transit to organize the appointments to the Regional Transit Advisory Panel (RTAP) as approved at the HRTPO's July meeting. During the 2020 General Assembly session, the legislature passed House Bill 1726 and Senate Bill 1038 which created the Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund (HRRTF). As part of this action, the General Assembly included the following provision:

*"That the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization shall establish a regional transit advisory panel composed of representatives of major business and industry groups, employers, shopping destinations, institutions of higher education, military installations, hospitals, and health care centers, public transit entities, and any other groups identified as necessary to provide ongoing advice to the regional planning process required pursuant to § 33.2-286 of the Code of Virginia on the long-term vision for a multimodal regional public transit network in Hampton Roads."*

The first meeting of the RTAP will occur on November 18.

The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on November 4. Agenda items included the following:

- Hampton Roads Workforce Council Update
- CAO Committee Appointments (Vice-Chair and representative to the HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel and Budget Committee)
- State Building Code Update
- Update on the Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA)
- Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework
- Regional Interest Items

The Southside Network Authority will hold its next meeting on November 16. The Authority and its Executive Director are working with Columbia Telecommunications Corporation (CTC) to finalize the routing for the Southside fiber ring and determine the best approach to finance and construct this ring. A decision for these items is planned for the first quarter of 2021. After this process is completed, the second phase of this effort will be the planning and design of a similar fiber ring on the Peninsula.

The HRPDC/HRTPO Executive Director provided a presentation on the Hampton Roads region's transportation initiatives to the 757/RVA Collaborative on October 13.

The Executive Director participated as a panelist at a forum sponsored by the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce on October 14, joining Senator Monty Mason and Jim Utterback from the Virginia Department of Transportation to discuss regional transportation efforts.

The HRPDC/HRTPO Office of Community Affairs and Civil Rights (OCACR) has coordinated the following efforts on behalf of the Organization over the past month:

- The Quadrennial Certification Review for the HRTPO. This two-day review involved representatives of the HRTPO staff, Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Department of Transportation, Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Community Advisory Committee, and other state, federal, and regional partners
- Development of a strategy to address the Title VI and Civil Rights needs of the HRPDC
- Provision of background information to VDOT representatives related to their inventory and audit of both the HRTPO and HRPDC
- Management of the Organization's electronic meetings processes, including the receipt of public comments
- Initiation of discussions with HRTAC regarding the Organization's Title VI and Civil Rights requirements
- Website management
- Agency Newsletter

On October 20, the Executive Director gave a presentation to the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association, providing information on the regional coordination role the HRPDC has played during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Executive Director continues to participate in meetings of the Regional Roundtable, which is a 10-member group of regional organizations that meet on a regular basis to share information and discuss regional coordination opportunities.

The Executive Director participated in the Commonwealth Task Force on Offshore Wind meeting that was held on October 20 and serves on the Executive Committee for this effort.

On October 23, the Executive Director and members of the HRTPO staff met with CAOs from the Peninsula to discuss opportunities for extending the Virginia Capital Trail into Hampton Roads and through the Peninsula localities to Fort Monroe. HRTPO staff provided an overview of the status of various trail segments and short-term opportunities to build portions of this trail. The Executive Director will assume a coordination role for this effort, and a second meeting with the Peninsula CAOs will be scheduled for December.

HRTPO staff provided coordination for the Regional Connectors Study Joint Meeting between the project's Working Group and Policy Committee on October 27.

On October 29, the Executive Director facilitated a retreat discussion with the Williamsburg City Council to finalize a vision statement and set of goals to guide the City's efforts. This session was a follow-up to a two-day retreat facilitated by the Executive Director with the City management team last year to develop the draft vision statement and goal set.

The HRTPO Executive Director joined HRTAC Executive Director Kevin Page and HRT President and CEO William Harrell in a briefing to the Virginia Beach Hotel Association on October 29. This briefing discussed the status of transportation projects and initiatives in the Hampton Roads region, including the status of the region's priority transportation projects and the new Hampton Roads Regional Transit Fund.

The Executive Director participated in a meeting of the Norfolk Naval Station Executive Advisory Board on October 30. This study is evaluating options for providing enhanced transit service to the Naval Station Norfolk.

The Executive Director participated in a meeting with Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) officials on November 2 to discuss the HRPDC's regional coordination role during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also on November 2, HRPDC staff participated in a discussion with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality on the Chesapeake Bay program.

On November 5, the HRTPO and HRTAC Executive Directors provided a presentation to the CIVIC Leadership Class on the region's transportation projects and initiatives.

The Executive Director participated in a forum entitled *Early Childhood Education in the 757* on November 9.

On November 9, the Executive Director and HRTPO staff participated in a meeting with Newport News City staff and VDOT to discuss the Denbigh interchange project.

Staff participated in a meeting of the Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (VAMPO) on November 9.

On November 10, the Executive Director held a meeting with representatives of the Richmond/Hampton Roads Mega Region initiative to discuss collaborative opportunities to advocate for the completion of the I-64 "gap" between the 757 and RVA.

The Community Advisory Committee held its regularly scheduled meeting on November 12. Agenda items included a discussion of the Buy Local Initiative, the COVID-19 regional

messaging campaign, an update on the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel project, and a discussion of the VDOT public relations program.

The HRPDC/HRTPO Management Team continues to advance work on the following initiatives:

- COVID-19 Building and Operations Planning
- IT management
- Human Resource management
- Procurement Oversight
- Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) manual and guidelines
- Financial management support for the HRPDC, HRTPO, HRTAC, HRMFFA, and Southside Network Authority