

FY 2010 Highlights & Annual Report

October 2010



Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission
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www.rrregion.org

The purpose of Planning District, or Regional Commissions, as set forth in the Code of Virginia, Section 15.2-4207, is:

*“...to encourage and facilitate **local government cooperation and state-local cooperation** in addressing on a regional basis problems of greater than local significance. The cooperation resulting from this chapter is intended to facilitate the **recognition and analysis of regional opportunities** and take account of regional influences in planning and implementing public policies and services.*

*The [regional commission] shall also promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the district by planning, and encouraging and assisting localities to **plan for the future.**”*

The Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC), one of 21 such regional, or Planning District Commissions across the state, provides a variety of cost-effective, coordinated and professional technical services to its member local governments.

Such services, among others, include:

- Grant-writing, technical assistance, and program administration
- Project management
- Land use planning and mapping (GIS)
- Rural transportation planning, corridor study development, rideshare/commuter services delivery, bicycle and pedestrian facility planning, and public transit integration
- Environmental planning, including, water quality improvement efforts, such as Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development and Implementation, water supply and hazard mitigation planning, and open space and agricultural/rural character preservation

All are central facets of the Planning District/Regional Commission’s role.

Across the Commonwealth, Planning District/Regional Commissions also collectively constitute an accessible data network .

Each serves as an Affiliate State Data Center for its respective region. In this role, they provide important information to local government, businesses and community residents.

Planning District/Regional Commissions are the designated point of contact for the Commonwealth’s Intergovernmental Review process, and in turn provide vital regional input and feedback on proposed plans for a host of other agencies and entities.

The program work of Planning Districts/Regional Commissions has been meeting the needs of local and state government for over 40 years, with the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC) having served its member jurisdictions since the organization’s founding in 1973.

Finally, commissions facilitate enhanced regional coordination and broad-based citizen participation in a cost effective manner.



REGIONAL COMMISSIONERS & STAFF

COMMISSIONERS

Culpeper County

*Sue D. Hansohn, Vice-Chair
Ruth B. Updike

Fauquier County

Anthony Hooper
Chester Stribling

Madison County

*James L. Arrington, *Executive Committee At-Large*
Lisa Robertson

Orange County

Julie Jordan
Grover C. Wilson, Jr.

Rappahannock County

*John W. McCarthy, *Executive Committee At-Large*
Roger Welch

As of October 2010

*RRRC Executive Committee Member

Town of Culpeper

Calvin "Chip" Coleman
Thomas Huggard, *Treasurer*

Town of Gordonsville

*Robert Coiner, *Chair*

Town of Madison

William L. Lamar

Town of Orange

*Harry Hopkins, Jr., *Executive Committee At-Large*
Greg Woods

Town of Remington

Callie Kyhl

Town of The Plains

Robert Gurtler

Town of Warrenton

W. Hunt Cheatwood
Powell Duggan

Town of Washington

John Fox Sullivan

STAFF

Jeffrey Walker, AICP, *Executive Director*

Jenny Biche', *Mobility Program Coordinator*

Deirdre Clark, *Environmental Planning Program Manager*

Sue Hromyak, *Office Manager/RRRC Commuter Services*

Patrick Mauney, *GIS Program Manager*

Terry Snead, *Grants Administrator/Fiscal Officer*

Cathy Zielinski, *Human Services Planning Program Manager*



Cover., Top Left: Rappahannock County, VA
Cover, Bottom Right: 2010 RRRC Living Towns Planning Workshop, Culpeper, VA
Opposite Page: Old Rag Mountain from Graves Mountain Lodge, Syria, VA
Left: Kestner Wayside Park, Culpeper, VA

LIVING TOWNS PLANNING WORKSHOP



Living Towns Workshop participants outside St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Culpeper, VA

The eighth annual RRRC Living Towns Planning Workshop was held on September 16th, 2010 at the Culpeper Depot in the Town of Culpeper. Workshop attendees heard presentations on diverse topics including recreational trails and their connection to community development and vitality, the role that the arts and theater redevelopment play in downtown revitalization, as well as the use of traditional planning and zoning tools to stimulate the arts and recreation within the local community.

Speakers from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Americans for the Arts, as well as the cities of Alexandria, Charlottesville and Roanoke, Virginia and the town of Abingdon, Virginia shared success stories and lessons learned in integrating arts and recreation opportunities with local and regional planning and economic development initiatives.

The 2010 Living Towns Workshop also provided an opportunity to experience and explore the historic Town of Culpeper. Local eateries provided a 'Taste of Culpeper' lunch and local historians gave a mid-day walking tour of historic sites in downtown Culpeper, including the restored Culpeper Depot, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and the birthplace of A.P. Hill.

The 2011 Living Towns Workshop is slated for the Town of The Plains.

LIVING TOWNS HISTORY

The purpose of the Living Towns annual workshop series is to bring together representatives of the region's towns with those of public and private sector entities to network and exchange information on planning, revitalization and preservation of towns as vital economic living centers.

- 2002:** Town of Orange
- 2003:** Town of Warrenton
- 2004:** Town of Remington
- 2005:** Village of Marshall
- 2006:** Town of Gordonsville
- 2007:** Village of Sperryville
- 2008:** Town of Madison
- 2009:** Living Lands Workshop
- 2010:** Town of Culpeper
- 2011:** Town of The Plains

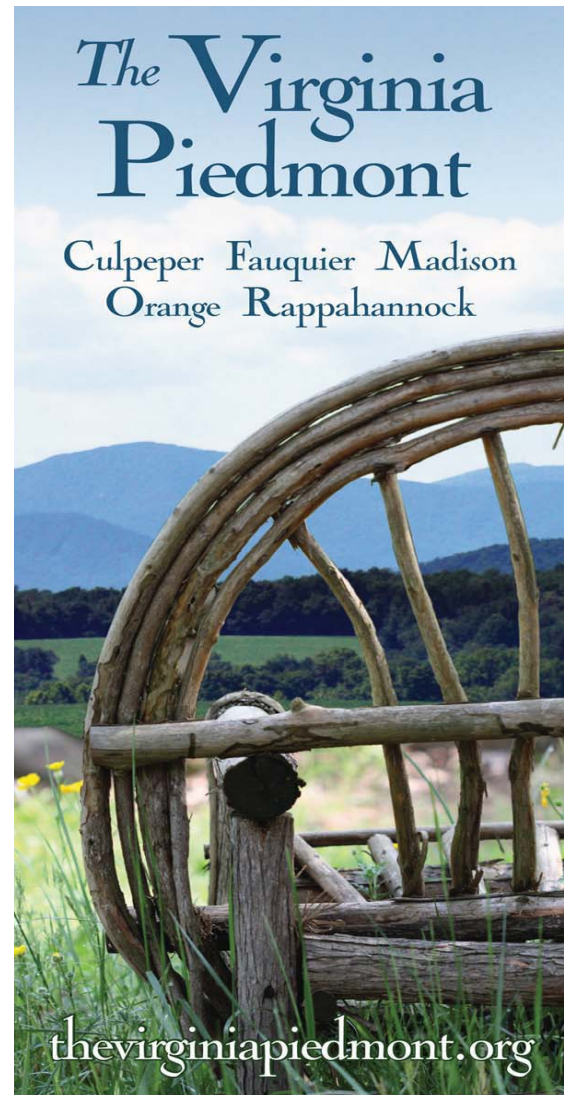
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

In 2010, the RRRRC Regional Tourism Committee continued the development and expansion of 'The Virginia Piedmont' brand via design and distribution of a brochure focusing on the Rappahannock-Rapidan region as an area tourism destination.

As a print companion to the regional tourism website, found at www.thevirginiapiedmont.org, the brochure provides an overview of the region's offerings, inclusive of agritourism destinations, wineries and distilleries, recreational opportunities, historic sites and arts and theater locations. As with the website, the brochure encourages patrons to explore each of the region's five counties, with website and contact information for each county's tourism efforts.

Copies of the brochure may be requested by calling (888) 49PDMNT or online at www.thevirginiapiedmont.org.

The RRRRC Tourism Committee is made up of town and county tourism directors, economic development directors and regional tourism professionals. The committee meets quarterly to share ongoing tourism initiatives, regional tourism promotional opportunities and identify regional tourism goals and needs.



Wilderness Battlefield Exhibit Shelter, Orange County, VA

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Regional Commission's Transportation Planning program has provided valuable assistance to member jurisdictions and a strong focus on regional project and planning coordination since its inception. The formation of regional committees focused on long-term transportation planning and human services transportation planning have enabled the Regional Commission to play a key role in the mapping of the region's future transportation infrastructure.

The RRRC Rural Transportation Technical Committee (RTC), made up of town and county planners, Virginia Department of Transportation representatives and regional transportation stakeholders, has taken a leading role in identifying and developing the Regional Commission's transportation work program and provides a valuable resource for local planners to weigh in on topics of regional and statewide importance, as well as gather input on local transportation planning efforts.

The Foothills Area Mobility System (FAMS) has evolved from a human services transportation planning committee into a mobility management program, supplying needed coordination between the region's transit providers through the development of a regional one-call center for transit assistance, as well as identifying gaps in transportation services in the region. In 2010, FAMS was awarded a grant from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to begin a pilot transit route between Culpeper and Charlottesville with a goal of enabling easier access to the health centers located outside of the Rappahannock-Rapidan region.

The Regional Commission completed its fourth annual travel time survey of regional transportation corridors in 2010. To date, the program has collected baseline travel time data for eleven corridors in the region, spanning each of the five counties and four of the region's towns.

The 2010 travel time survey collected data along Route 20 in the Town of Orange and Orange County from the western town limits to the intersection with Route 3 at Wilderness, as well as Route 28 in Fauquier County from the intersection with Routes 15 and 29 north of Remington to the Prince William County boundary.

The purpose of these initial travel time surveys is to collect baseline data to be used as comparative data for future studies of the same corridors in the region. Through the first four years, Commission staff have worked with the RRRC Rural Transportation Technical Committee and the Virginia Department of Transportation to identify corridors for study and identified total travel times for each

corridor, points of delay within each corridor, as well as average travel time, delay times and travel speeds.

Beginning with the 2011 RRRC travel time survey, the Regional Commission will utilize upgraded GPS hardware and software to further streamline the data collection process and provide additional analysis tools and data output resources.

The 2010 RRRC Travel Time Survey is available at:
www.rrregion.org/publications

Left: Intersection of Route 20 and Route 522, Orange County, VA



RRRC COMMUTER SERVICES



The RRRC Commuter Services program has long been a cornerstone of the Regional Commission’s efforts at promoting sustainable transportation solutions and long-term planning and decision making. In 2010, RRRC Commuter Services, in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, completed the program’s first Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Agency Plan. The plan outlines the long-range goals and objectives of the RRRC Commuter Services program and will serve as an operational and management tool for the program’s short-term planning efforts. The adoption of the TDM plan enables the Regional Commission, through its Commuter Services program, to access future state funds for TDM activities through the Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

The core of the RRRC Commuter Services program is made up of three key components:

- Ridesharing Services, inclusive of carpools, vanpools and commuters buses and in coordination with the Commuter Connections program in and around the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area
- Information services and personal travel planning assistance
- Employer outreach

The TDM plan identifies a number of future goals and strategies for the RRRC Commuter Services program, notably:

- increasing awareness and visibility of the program and its offerings throughout the region
- marketing to long-distance commuters, promoting commuter cost and time savings, and targeting large regional employers for local ridesharing and commuting opportunities
- Improving regional mobility and use of alternative modes of transportation, such as exploring additional connections to mass transportation modes outside of the region and strengthening transit options within the Rappahannock-Rapidan region

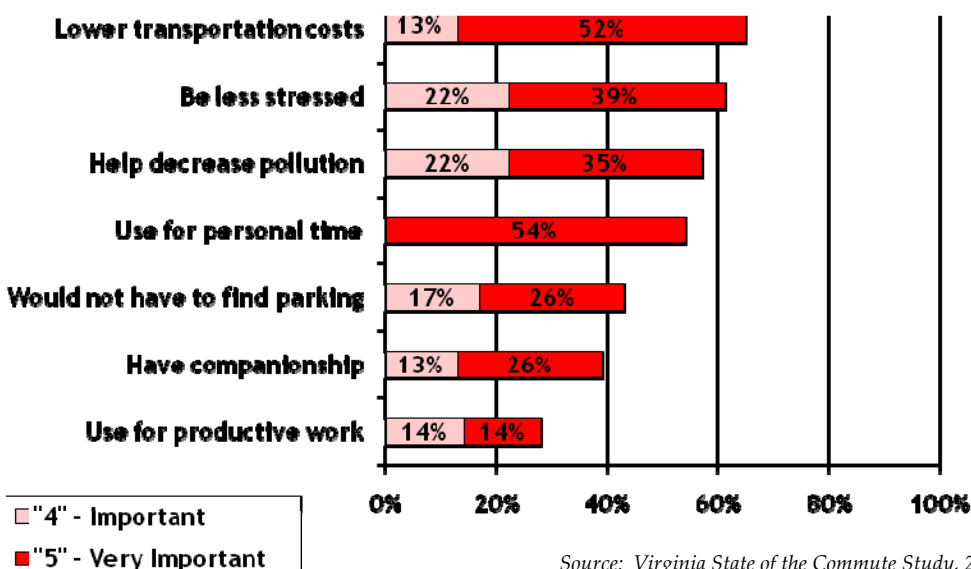
PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

RRRC’s Commuter Services program partnered with the Vint Hill Economic Development Authority in Fauquier County to establish additional ridesharing opportunities for the region’s commuters in 2010 with the opening of a convenient new park and ride lot.

Located not far from Route 29 in northeastern Fauquier County, the Park and Ride Lot is located at the intersection of Kennedy Road and Aiken Drive and provides 40 parking spaces in a paved and lighted location.

Exploring new partnerships with local employers, governments and commuters who work within, and outside of, the Rappahannock-Rapidan region, is a central component of RRRC’s Commuter Services program as part of its commitment to serving the transportation needs of the region.

Reasons Commuters in the Rappahannock-Rapidan region use Alternative Modes of Transportation



Source: Virginia State of the Commute Study, 2007

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Regional Commission worked hand in hand with the Culpeper County Building Department in 2010 to develop a pair of proposals for funding under the Virginia Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG), overseen by the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and supported by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The partnership between staff at both the Regional Commission and Culpeper County resulted in funded proposals that were two of only 26 finalists chosen for funding under the EECBG program.

Approved for funding in the amount of \$447,349 and \$16,295, respectively, for each of the jointly prepared submittals, the proposals focused on emerging green technologies, calling for the development of a regional technical resource center to provide training in energy conservation and green building practices, and the establishment of energy efficient construction standards with incentives for builders and property owners.

The Regional Commission's Environmental Planning program continues to provide leadership and critical project management for a diverse array of projects and initiatives throughout the Rappahannock-Rapidan region.

The Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) effort is the most well-known environmental program at the Regional Commission and is now in the process of TMDL Implementation planning for streams in both Fauquier and Madison counties, the fourth such TMDL implementation project managed by the Regional Commission, following previous efforts in Fauquier and Rappahannock counties.

The Regional Commission also continues to coordinate efforts for the Center for Rappahannock-Rapidan Environmental Stewardship (CRRES). CRRES is made up of local planners, non-profit environmental organizations and state agency representatives, including the two local Soil and Water Conservation Districts. CRRES supports educational and outreach efforts of these organizations in the Rappahannock-Rapidan region and initiates and exchange best management practices information and tools.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

In 2010, the Regional Commission began the process of updating the regional All-Hazards Mitigation Plan, originally adopted and approved by FEMA in 2005. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires that each Hazard Mitigation plan be updated every five years.

Since the adoption of its first hazard mitigation plan in 2005, the Rappahannock-Rapidan region has experienced significant growth and changes in demographics, service demands, transportation needs and economic development.

The Regional Commission is providing project management and coordination for the hazard mitigation plan update and is working with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and emergency services coordinators and planners from each participating jurisdiction in the region.

Data collection and hazard assessment are currently ongoing and the Regional Commission expects to complete the plan update in 2011.



Route 20 looking east during February 2010 snowstorms, Orange County, VA

Funded by a grant from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund, the Regional Commission developed the "It's Your Doodie" Pet Photo contest in 2010 in an effort to actively involve the public in improving local water quality and overall public health. The project also involved partnership organizations Fauquier County Parks and Recreation and the John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District.



Twenty-nine entries were received and 'Odie,' a Doberman mix, adopted by owners Rebecca and Al Kellert from the Fauquier County SPCA, was selected as the winning canine by judges. Odie will become the face of responsible pet waste management on brochures, fliers, bookmarks and other educational outreach materials to be distributed by the Commission.

All of the candidates who participated received a "Canine Certificate of Participation," in acknowledgement of their support for cleaner water and a healthier environment in the Rappahannock-Rapidan region.

A separate grant from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation's Virginia Naturally program also enabled the purchase of four pet waste information and disposal bag kiosks to be installed along Whites Mill Trail in Warrenton, and will pay for water quality testing to be performed by Fauquier County students in Cedar Run stream that runs along the trail from July until December to determine the effect the kiosks play in improving water quality.



White's Mill Trail and Cedar Run, Fauquier County, VA

REGIONAL DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP AWARDS

ANNUAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS RECOGNIZE SIGNIFICANT AREA CONTRIBUTIONS TO ENHANCED REGIONAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION ACROSS PD9

The RRRC annual *Distinguished Leadership- Citizen & Government Awards* were initiated in 2007 to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of member jurisdiction citizen and government community leaders who have gone above and beyond in their promotion and encouragement of enhanced regional communication, coordination and regional planning across the **R-R Region**, or **Planning District Nine**.

In October 2009, the Regional Commission presented Robert Anderson, longtime Rappahannock County Board of Supervisors member and Chairman, member of the Rappahannock River Basin Commission and Regional Commissioner from 1973 to 1983 and 1998 to 2009, with the *Government Award* as testament to his long career of public service and “unshakeable integrity, diligence and belief in doing his civic duty.”

Fellow Rappahannock County resident Beverly Hunter was presented with the *Citizen Award* for her work on behalf of numerous environmental initiatives throughout

the region, notably ““the way she has succeeded in getting local and area residents to think about water resources . . . not only through data collection and related GIS-mapping efforts, but through the founding of the citizen-based RappFLOW organization.”



2010 RRRC Leadership Awards
Left: Robert Anderson
Below: Beverly Hunter



View from Sweely Estate Winery, Madison, VA

HONORING OUR REGION'S PAST

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The Regional Commission produces a quarterly newsletter that is distributed digitally to Regional Commissioners, local officials, planners, economic development managers and other interested stakeholders. Past issues can be found at: <http://www.rregion.org/news>.

A feature of each newsletter for the past several years is the 'Then & Now' section, comparing a photo from the Rappahannock-Rapidan region's past with a modern-day view. Past features include downtown architectural comparisons, Main Streets through the years and aerial imagery comparisons of specific areas within the region.



Top Left: Sperryville, VA

Middle Left: James Madison Museum, Town of Orange, VA

Bottom Left: Gayheart's Pharmacy (Now Frost Diner), Culpeper, VA circa 1941

Top Right: Town of Madison, VA circa 1908

Bottom Right: Town of Remington, VA circa 1930



The offices of the **RRRC/Planning District 9** are located in **Southridge Office Park**, S. 106, just off Rt. 29Bus/Madison Road in the Town of Culpeper. Office hours are M-F 8:30-5:00.

(540) 829-7450 phone (540) 829-7452 fax planinfo@rrregion.org



Rappahannock-Rapidan
REGIONAL COMMISSION

*The Town
of
Washington*

