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.
COMMISSIONERS

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

Fauquier County
Paul S. McCulla
*Chester W. Stribling, Executive Committee At-Large

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

Orange County
Julie Jordan
Grover C. Wilson, Jr.

Rappahannock County
*John W. McCarthy, Treasurer
  Roger Welch

As of September 2011
*RRRC Executive Committee Member

Town of Culpeper
Kimberly L. Alexander
Calvin “Chip” Coleman

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 Biché, Mobility Program Coordinator
Michelle Edwards, Regional Planner II—Environmental
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: Celebrating Shenandoah National Park’s 75th Anniversary
Opposite Page: View from Blue Rock Inn, Washington, VA
Left: Culpeper, VA
Environmental planning is one of cornerstones of the Regional Commission’s overall mission and programs range from Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies to stormwater management and environmental education and outreach. Working with area jurisdictions and non-profit environmental groups, the Regional Commission works to provide leadership and project management on a variety of environmental issues that transcend local and regional boundaries.

In 2011, the Regional Commission reconvened its longstanding Land Use and Environment Committee in a continuing effort to provide local administrators, planners, and environmental managers an opportunity to discuss and exchange information on key issues, in many case, pertaining to local, state, and federal regulations and programs. Facilitated information exchange is the main objective for the Regional Commission with the Land Use and Environment Committee, but review of state programs and legislation, consensus-building, and solicitation of feedback from across the region are fundamental functions of the committee, as well.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

**In late 2010,** the Regional Commission hosted two workshops to begin the development of a regional green infrastructure inventory. Held in November and December, the workshops provided interested stakeholders representing local and state government, soil and water conservation districts, area non-profit organizations and community members an opportunity to provide input at the onset of this multi-phase region-wide initiative.

Participants identified the development of regional green infrastructure map and database, along with focus on "an interconnected network of natural and cultural assets that conserves ecosystem values and functions and provides benefit to people," as long-term goals.

The Regional Commission is continuing work with the Land Use and Environment Committee to guide the process, and recently secured funding through the Virginia Department of Forestry to undertake a key first phase of the Regional Green Infrastructure Mapping project.

The development of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Studies and Implementation Plans on behalf of the Virginia Departments of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Environmental Quality (DEQ) has long been a central focus for the Commission’s environmental planning program. Over the past year, the Regional Commission completed three TMDL Implementation Plans on stream networks that reach four of the five counties in the region.

In Fauquier County, Browns Run, Craigs Run and Marsh Run were part of a TMDL planning process completed in November 2010 and included recommendations for the replacement of failing septic systems, effective management of pet waste and implementation of stormwater best management practices.

In Madison and Culpeper counties, a section of the Robinson River and Little Dark Run were studied and recommendations made included improved pasture management practices, removal of straight pipes, and improvements to septic systems.

Finally, a third TMDL Implementation Plan was completed in Orange and Louisa counties in the York River Basin. This plan was for six impaired streams spanning three planning districts, and three soil and water conservation districts.

Each initiative involved extensive outreach, community engagement, and environmental education.
In 2011, the RRRC Regional Tourism Committee continued the development and expansion of ‘The Virginia Piedmont brand. The first print of 15,000 brochures is nearly depleted and updates are being planned focusing on the Rappahannock-Rapidan region as an area tourism destination. The brochure provides an overview of the region’s many offerings, inclusive of agri-tourism destinations, wineries and distilleries, outdoor recreational amenities, historic sites and arts and theater locations.

The regional tourism website, which can be found at www.thevirginiapiedmont.org, also profiles different local events each month and, as with the brochure, encourages visitors to explore the abundant offering of each of the region’s five counties, and eight towns with website and contact information for each county’s tourism efforts.

Copies of the brochure may be requested by calling (888) 49PDMNT (497-3668) or online at www.thevirginiapiedmont.org.

The RRRC Regional Tourism Committee is comprised of town and county tourism directors, economic development officials and other area tourism-related stakeholders. The committee meets quarterly to share information on ongoing tourism initiatives, promotional opportunities and needs.
There are three core entities responsible for transportation planning at the Regional Commission:

- The Rural Transportation Technical Committee- made up of area planning directors, transportation planners, providers and related stakeholders. This group, responsible for development of the Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan, meets on a monthly basis to advance projects, and in response to evolving needs.

- The Foothills Area Mobility System (FAMS) steering committee—made up of human services transportation providers, the Regional Commission’s mobility manager and representatives of the region’s elderly and disabled populations. FAMS helps provide necessary coordination between these groups and also oversees the development of and updates of the region’s Coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan.

- The Commuter Services program—encompasses the Commission’s Transportation Demand Management (TDM) planning and programming (see following page).

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

The RRRC Foothills Express Shuttle Bus service was inaugurated in November 2010 in response to longstanding need among residents for fixed transit between Culpeper and Charlottesville, and has been met with enthusiastic support.

The wheelchair-accessible shuttle bus makes three round trips to Charlottesville every Tuesday and Thursday, with departures from the Culpeper Regional Hospital and Madison Plaza Food Lion, for individuals with health appointments, and other para-transit needs.

RRRC works with area human services providers, medical facilities, hospitals and businesses to promote the shuttle and gather data on evolving transit demand.

While the shuttle has no eligibility requirements, to date, two thirds of the trips taken have been to UVA for medical appointments.

Made possible through New Freedom funding, the Foothills Express is a program of RRRC and the Foothills Area Mobility System, and operated by JAUNT, Inc.

Transportation planning is a critical area of focus for the Regional Commission, highlighted by the adoptions of a Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRP) in 2011 and a Regional Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan in 2010.

While the TDM plan serves as a guide for the future efforts of the Commuter Services program, the RLRP identifies area transportation goals assembled by the committee, along with detailed needs based on analysis of VDOT data and extensive stakeholder feedback. Intersection, corridor, and other deficiencies are identified through the year 2035.

The Commission’s Rural Transportation Committee oversaw local and regional review of the plan, in cooperation with the Virginia Departments of Transportation (VDOT) and Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). The plan is the result of a four-year planning process and is expected to be updated on an ongoing 5-year basis in the future as construction projects are completed and additional needs identified.
The RRRC Commuter Services program has likewise long been a cornerstone of the Regional Commission’s efforts at promoting sustainable transportation solutions and effective long-term planning and decision making.

The core of the RRRC Commuter Services program is made up of three key components:
- Rideshare assistance, inclusive of carpools, vanpools and commuter buses in coordination with Commuter Connections in and around the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area
- Information dissemination and education on the subject of daily commuting
- Employer outreach

Goals and strategies for the RRRC Commuter Services program include:
- 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 identifying possible additional connections to mass transportation modes outside of the region, and expanding the number of transit options within the region

RRRC Commuter Services is currently participating in a VDOT statewide Park and Ride Study along with other rideshare programs across the Commonwealth.

The goals of the initiative, among others, are to identify opportunities for improvement and expansion of the statewide park and ride lot system, improve public awareness of and access to information about the facilities, and enhance collaboration with various multimodal partners. Recommendations for existing and proposed lot facilities and accompanying network best practices will be developed.

The 2011 Urban Mobility Report, published by the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M University, illustrates congested conditions in 2010 on a number of levels:
- The amount of delay endured by the average commuter on an annual basis was 34 hours, up from 14 hours in 1982.
- The estimated cost incurred as a result of congestion is more than $100 billion each year, nearly $750 for every commuter in the U.S.
- “Rush hour” is six hours of not rushing anywhere.

Congestion can be as big a problem outside of “rush hour” as during it, with about 40 percent of the delay occurring during midday and overnight hours, creating an increasingly serious problem for businesses that rely on efficient production and deliveries.

Fact: The Washington D.C./VA/MD region ranks #1 in the nation in “Wasted Hours” (Yearly Delay per Commuter) sitting in traffic.

New marketing initiatives continue to make RRRC’s Commuter Services program even more visible than ever. A billboard in Culpeper, radio ads on WJMA, gas pump toppers at local stations, and a van wrap were the latest additions to program advertising over the past year. You can even Like Us on Facebook!

Exploring new partnerships with area employers, local governments and commuters who work in and outside of the region, is a central aim of RRRC’s Commuter Services program as part of its commitment to serving area commuters.
The Regional Commission has extensive experience in affordable housing planning as well. Following the surge in housing construction and home prices in the region in the early part of the last decade, the Commission convened and staffed the regional Workforce Affordable Housing committee in order to advise the Commission on the subject of workforce affordable housing issues, compile relevant data, and support area efforts to expand and retain workforce affordable housing.

With the recent drop in home prices across the nation, the Commission has turned its attention to other housing initiatives, including the Neighborhood Stabilization Program in Fauquier County (detailed at right), and a renewed focus on Continuum of Care planning and coordination, with an emphasis on assisting the human service agencies and homeless shelters in the region.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT**

RRRC has provided project management and grant administration for Fauquier County’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) since its inception in 2009. Through NSP, Fauquier County has acquired seven foreclosed properties in the Bealeton and Remington areas, repaired and resold six of them to low income families or individuals. The seventh property was transferred to Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services (formerly RRCSB) for use as a group home for adults with intellectual disabilities. Five of the houses were sold to families below 50 percent of Area Median Income.

The NSP grant brought in $1.675 million to Fauquier County for neighborhoods experiencing high levels of foreclosure. Through the project, houses have been improved, helping local property values, and low-income families have been able to purchase affordable homes. The program has generated over $800,000 in program income, which will be used to buy additional foreclosed properties to continue the program.
As set forth in the Code of Virginia, Section 15.2-4207, Regional Commissions shall: "... 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."

As such, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission also provides technical planning assistance to member jurisdictions, in an effort to foster cooperation among its member jurisdictions, together with the state. Technical assistance offered by the Regional Commission includes comprehensive plan review and consultation, data collection and updates, income surveys, and GIS mapping.

In 2011, the Regional Commission assisted three of its member counties and one member town with redistricting technical assistance. Redistricting is required every ten years after the completion of the U.S. Census decennial population count in order to ensure equal representation in election districts and that there is an absence of racial discriminatory purpose and effect in the accompanying redistricting process. Culpeper, Orange and Rappahannock counties and the Town of Warrenton worked with the Regional Commission to balance their election districts based on the 2010 Census figures. Additionally, the Regional Commission provided updates regarding the statewide redistricting efforts that resulted in several changes in the region for representation to the House of Delegates and Senate of Virginia.
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 planning across the R-R Region, or Planning District Nine.

In October 2010, the Regional Commission presented Frank Bossio, Culpeper County Administrator with the Government Award, in recognition of his long-standing leadership and exemplary example set on inter-jurisdictional initiatives, including regional health insurance consortium, area mutual aid agreement expansion, emergency communications interoperability, and solid waste disposal agreement negotiation.

Culpeper County resident John J. “Butch” Davies was similarly presented with the Citizen Award for his long-time contributions on numerous initiatives throughout the region, notably as Virginia Delegate and member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, together with his noted ability to inspire others to work and engage in community service.

PREVIOUS REGIONAL DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP Awardees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Citizen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Harry Atherton</td>
<td>Khalil Hassan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Ruth Updike</td>
<td>David Scott</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Robert Anderson</td>
<td>Bev Hunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Frank Bossio</td>
<td>John J. ‘Butch’ Davies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Farms and orchards throughout the region provide not only great things to eat, but peaceful vistas and a sense of tranquility. Experience life on the farm first-hand and see where food comes from. Farm tours allow you to spend a day or a weekend visiting farms and learn how they operate. In addition, the area’s many farmer’s markets sell fresh locally-grown fruits, vegetables, cheeses and other natural products. Make a point of purchasing your items there!
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.

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