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
John Coates
*Sue D. Hansohn, Executive Committee At-Large

Fauquier County
Paul S. McCulla
*Chester W. Stribling, Vice-Chairman

Madison County
Ernest Hoch
*Doris Lackey, Executive Committee At-Large

Orange County
Julie Jordan Summs
Grover C. Wilson, Jr.

Rappahannock County
*John W. McCarthy, Treasurer
Roger Welch

As of September 2013
*RRRC Executive Committee Member

Town of Culpeper
James Clements
Calvin “Chip” Coleman

Town of Gordonsville
*Robert Coiner, Executive Committee At-Large

Town of Madison
William L. Lamar

Town of Orange
*Harry Hopkins, Jr., Chairman
Greg Woods

Town of Remington
Evan “Skeet” Ashby

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

Opposite Page: Annual RRRC Board/Staff Retreat
Left: Madison County, VA
Cover, Top Right: Town of Orange, VA
Cover, Middle: Rappahannock County, VA
Cover, Lower Left: Early RRRC Meeting
In 2013, The Regional Commission completed Phase II of its regional green infrastructure mapping effort. Green infrastructure is an interconnected network of natural lands, working landscapes and other open spaces that conserve ecosystem values and functions and provide associated benefits to human populations. By identifying the existing green infrastructure, communities can assist decision-makers in making more informed land-use and development decisions.

Phase II of the regional green infrastructure mapping effort focused on updating and fine-tuning three more Virginia Conservation Lands Needs Assessment (VCLNA) GIS data layers for the region: forest economics and cultural assets. The phase also produced a GIS data layer of protected lands for the region, based on the Virginia Conservation Lands Database.

The objective of the Forest Economic Model is to identify the Rappahannock-Rapidan region’s forested lands with the highest economic value. Working with DOF, DCR developed the original model to analyze biophysical parameters, management constraints and socioeconomic influences. The Regional Commission then updated the state model using DOF land cover data and local development data to reflect changes in land cover.

The Regional Cultural Assets Model identifies the Rappahannock-Rapidan region’s lands with the highest relative historic and cultural value. DCR partnered with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources to develop the statewide Cultural Asset Model in 2006. The Commission’s update to the VCLNA statewide model consisted of incorporating new easement data, local parks data and updated listings from the National Register of Historic Places.

For planning purposes, the four regional green infrastructure data layers can be incorporated and overlaid by area localities with other data layers, such as zoning, stream corridors or proposed roads. Applications of these data sets, among others, include:

- Comprehensive and transportation planning
- Parks and recreation, heritage tourism and cultural resource planning
- Creation of ag and forestal districts, and purchase/transfer of development rights programs
- Species and habitat protection
The tenth annual RRRC Living Towns Planning Workshop was held on August 22, 2013 at Orange Presbyterian Church in the Town of Orange. Workshop attendees heard presentations on diverse subjects including recreational trails and their relationship to community development and area livability, public engagement approaches and the importance of area festivals and niche events, as well as an array of other planning and economic development-related topics.

Speakers from the Virginia Farm Bureau Federation, Fauquier County, Orange County, and The Bed and Breakfast Association of Virginia, among others, shared timely success stories and lessons learned on integrating local and regional planning efforts, and implementation of economic development best management practices.

The 2013 workshop also provided an opportunity to experience and explore the historic Town of Orange. *Elmwood at Sparks* provided a delicious lunch and historians gave a mid-day walking tour of several noteworthy sites, including the Orange County Courthouse. The day concluded with a reception at the Arts Center of Orange with food prepared by *Real Food* and local *Barboursville* wines.
In Fiscal Year 2013, the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC) continued its role as lead agency and fiscal agent for the Foothills Housing Network, moving into a new era of regional affordable housing and homeless prevention efforts.

Over recent years, the federal and state approach to homeless services funding has undergone a paradigm shift – away from support for emergency shelters and transitional housing, and toward a model of housing first and rapid re-housing. As a result of this shift, between 2010 and 2012, the homeless shelters in the Rappahannock-Rapidan Region experienced a 90 percent decrease in state and federal funding. In order to adapt to federal and state changes and continue to address the needs of individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness, or in danger of homelessness, a regional Continuum of Care approach was required. The shelters and other homeless services stakeholders in the region, with leadership of RRRC, formed a proactive partnership, named the Foothills Housing Network, to coordinate intake, assessment and services, and to develop a ten-year plan to end homelessness in the region. This plan includes assessment and planning for affordable housing needs, a vital component of the Continuum of Care.

In FY 2013, RRRC was successful in securing three state grants to support these efforts. The Homeless Prevention Program, operated by Culpeper Community Development, provides short-term rental and utility payments and case management to 51 households throughout the region, including 38 families with children, to enable them avoid eviction and homelessness, and received supports needed to remain stably housed. The Homeless Solutions Grant, operated by Community Touch, Inc., assisted 43 homeless households, including 34 families with children, find permanent housing. This program also provides short-term rental and utility payments, case management, and housing locator services. The third grant was the Child Services Coordination Grant, which contributes to salaries for child services case managers in homeless shelters, and developed a regional resource guide to assist case managers in identifying and making referrals to community-based services. Through this program, child services case managers in the homeless shelters received training from Social Services and Community Services representatives and were given opportunities to network with each other and representatives of community-based resources.

### FOOTHILLS HOUSING NETWORK

- Regional partnership responsible for homeless continuum of care planning and implementation in PD9
- Recognized planning group of the Virginia Balance of State Continuum of Care, which is the HUD-designated Continuum of Care (CoC) for parts of Virginia not covered by independent CoCs
- Organized under by-laws and memoranda of agreement among members
- Members:
  - Aging Together
  - Community Touch, Inc.
  - Culpeper Community Development
  - Deane Outreach Ministries
  - Fauquier Family Shelter Services
  - Madison Emergency Services Association, Inc. (MESA)
  - Services to Abused Families (SAFE)
  - Culpeper Human Services
  - Fauquier County Department of Social Services
  - Madison County Department of Social Services
  - Orange County Department of Social Services
  - People, Inc.
  - Rappahannock County Department of Social Services
  - Rappahannock Rapidan Community Services
  - Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (Lead Agency)
  - Skyline CAP
- Formerly known as Piedmont Housing Network and Rappahannock-Rapidan Housing Network; lead agencies since 2004

Contact: Cathy M. Zielinski  
Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission  
(540) 829-7450 cmzielinski@rrregion.org
The Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (RRRC) and Culpeper Affordable Housing Committee recently released a draft of an Affordable Housing Needs Assessment Study for the Town of Culpeper. The Affordable Housing Committee recommended undertaking this study as part of a proactive approach to solving housing needs in Culpeper. The study addresses the condition of the current housing stock in Culpeper, provides information on the unmet housing need of various populations, and identifies priority areas for action. The report produced by this study is available to support future affordable housing projects by government, nonprofit or for-profit developers. The study was limited to the needs of the Town and County of Culpeper.

The study reports that about 1,000 households in the Town of Culpeper have incomes below $17,000 and should be paying no more than $450 per month for housing, if that housing is to be affordable. In contrast to this need, a survey of known landlords revealed that there are an estimated 171 rental units that are rent limited (where the tenant pays no more than 30 percent of household income) and an additional 26 units that rent for under $500 per month. The study concluded that there is a need for additional multifamily units with rents between $400 and $600 per month.

Another conclusion of the study is that there is a void in the underlying affordable housing network both in Culpeper and across the Region. At present, there is no freestanding formal entity – government or nonprofit – responsible for the regional planning, development and operation of needed affordable housing to serve people with disabilities or very low income families. RRRC is in the process of working to identify or establish such an entity, whose central mission is to fill that gap.
The Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Tourism Committee was recently recognized for its involvement in a regional tourism marketing and promotion initiative. For the fifth consecutive year, the Virginia Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus’ (VACVB) presented the VIRGO Travel and Tourism Awards at its spring meeting in Abingdon, VA. The award pays tribute to individuals, groups, businesses and destination marketing organizations that significantly contribute to the Commonwealth of Virginia’s economy through tourism promotion and development.

Leigh Mawyer, Orange County Tourism Director, accepted the award for Best Regional Marketing Initiative on behalf of the committee comprised of the Tourism Directors representing Culpeper, Fauquier, Madison, Orange and Rappahannock. These partners were recognized for the Civil War mobile website (http://m.thervirginiapiedmont.org), which was launched in January 2013. The mobile site, which complements the Commission’s Virginia Piedmont website, was created to commemorate the Civil War Sesquicentennial events and sites in the region. The site also allows for updates and adjustments following the Sesquicentennial to promote other themed tourism events and sites while increasing exposure and tourism in the region.

The mobile site was funded in part through a Virginia Tourism Corporation Sesquicentennial Grant, with each of the five county departments of tourism contributing matching funds. ITI Marketing, Inc. was the selected vendor who worked with the Regional Tourism Committee to design and develop the mobile site. In addition to the mobile site, grant funds were used to create rack cards highlighting the region’s Sesquicentennial events and included in the regional The Virginia Piedmont brochure. Together, the mobile site and brochure insert will target potential visitors to the Rappahannock-Rapidan region, increasing tourism and contributing to the local economy. The very popular regional tourism brochure was also updated this year and 15,000 copies were produced. They are available at local tourism offices, local inns, nearby resorts and select Virginia Welcome Centers.
The Regional Commission has collected travel time data along a number of regional corridors over the past seven years.

In 2013, Regional Commission staff collected GPS point data along U.S. Route 29 from the southern entrance to the Town of Culpeper north to the Fauquier County boundary with Prince William County, as well as along U.S. Route 17 from Opal to the Fauquier County boundary with Stafford County. These data sets can be used to identify and provide defensible data regarding congested corridors and intersections and will be used in the future to compare movements along roadway segments following major construction projects, including the Opal interchange in Fauquier County.

**RRRC COMMUTER SERVICES**

This year RRRC’s Commuter Services program celebrates 30 years of assisting commuters in the region. The program can help residents find or start a car or van pool by connecting commuters with others going the same way. We also have information about the regional commuter bus, VRE and Metro.

Among other significant initiatives this past year, staff collaborated with VDOT on the development of a statewide Park and Ride Lot website available at [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/parkride/home.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/parkride/home.asp)

**FOOTHILLS AREA MOBILITY SYSTEM**

Highlights of the program over the past year included:

- Six-month dialysis transportation pilot serving UVA Orange Dialysis patients in Orange, Madison & Culpeper counties through a grant from the Department of Aging & Rehabilitative Services
- Ongoing coordination of the Foothills Express shuttle between Culpeper, Madison and Charlottesville; currently providing an average of 250 one-way trips per month
- Update of the regional Coordinated Human Services Mobility (CHSM) Plan
- Ongoing coordination and development of the one-click component of the One-call Transportation Center at [http://www.fams.org](http://www.fams.org)
The RRRC annual Distinguished Leadership—Citizen & Government Awards were initiated in 2007 to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of member jurisdiction citizen and government leaders who have gone above and beyond in their promotion and encouragement of enhanced regional communication, coordination and planning across the R-R Region.

In October 2012, the Commission presented Orange County resident Bill Speiden with the Citizen Award, and Frederick P.D. Carr, recently retired Fauquier County Planning Director, with the Government Award, each for their numerous and significant contributions to their communities and surrounding region at large.

PREVIOUS REGIONAL DISTINGUISHED LEADERSHIP RECIPIENTS

<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>
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<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>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>John McCarthy</td>
<td>Mary Root</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Rick Carr</td>
<td>Bill Speiden</td>
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</tbody>
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Left: Town of Culpeper
It has been 40 years since the founding of the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission under 15.2-4207 of the Regional Cooperation Act. Chairman Richard E. McNear, of Fauquier County, opened the first meeting held at Culpeper Town Hall on January 16, 1973 with representatives from the four original member jurisdictions:

**Fauquier County**
- Mr. McNear & John B. Adams

**Orange County**
- Richard L. Sanford & Elbert W. Brown

**Rappahannock County**
- Robert P. Anderson & J. Newbill Miller

**Town of Warrenton:**
- Dr. William H. Allison & E.L Brower

The Commission, of course, has gone on to include all five counties and eight towns situated across the two thousand square-mile Rappahannock-Rapidan Region, or Planning District 9.

Its mission: to provide professional planning and technical resources, a concerted approach to regional cooperation, planning assistance with program delivery, and a forum for the interaction of appointed and elected local government officials and citizen members.

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### FROM FOUR TO FOURTEEN JURISDICTIONS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>January 1973</td>
<td>Fauquier County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1973</td>
<td>Orange County</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1973</td>
<td>Rappahannock County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 1973</td>
<td>Town of Warrenton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1974</td>
<td>Culpeper County</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 1974</td>
<td>Madison County</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 1978</td>
<td>Town of Culpeper</td>
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<td>October 1982</td>
<td>Town of Gordonsville</td>
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<td>October 1982</td>
<td>Town of Orange</td>
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<td>March 1987</td>
<td>Town of Remington</td>
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<td>January 1997</td>
<td>Town of Madison</td>
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<td>October 2007</td>
<td>Town of Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2009</td>
<td>Town of The Plains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Charter member Bob Anderson, center, of Rappahannock County, at an early RRRC Meeting
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