

The Quarterly Planner

Newsletter of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

Serving the counties of Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge and Rockingham, the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, and Waynesboro, and the towns of Bridgewater, Broadway, Craigsville, Dayton, Elkton, Glasgow, Goshen, Grottoes, Monterey, Mount Crawford, and Timberville

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Region Plans for Natural Hazards



This year the Region has experienced an unusually high number of natural hazard events including winter storms, hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, wildfires and even an earthquake. We know we can't stop these natural hazards from occurring, but we can prepare and plan for future disasters and put in place mitigation strategies and programs that will help reduce the damage, costs, and save property and lives.



Currently, with the assistance of the CSPDC, the 21 jurisdictions in the planning district are updating the Regional All Hazards Mitigation Plan. The Plan identifies and assesses the natural hazards that impact our Region and makes mitigation recommendations to abate these hazards. Every locality is required by federal legislation (Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000) to have an adopted mitigation Plan in order to be eligible to receive federal mitigation grant funds and to update the Plan every five years. The original mitigation Plan was completed in 2005 and adopted by all 21 jurisdictions. Included in the revised plan is new information on recent natural hazards and updated mitigation strategies of future projects for each locality. The Plan will be submitted to FEMA for approval and then presented to all the localities for adoption in early 2012.



Another planning process that is taking place to address a specific hazard is the Augusta County Wildfire Protection Plan. Augusta County is taking a proactive stance by developing a community wildfire protection plan that addresses wildfire risks in wildland-urban interface areas of the County. Augusta County has asked the CSPDC to assist them in developing the Plan and coordinate the planning process with key stakeholders such as the Virginia Department of Forestry, County Fire and Rescue, and U.S. Forest Service. The Plan will identify areas in the County that are vulnerable to wildfires and make recommendations that reduce the risks of wildfire. The Plan will address issues such as a wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness and structure protection. According to officials, this is the first and only Community Wildfire Protection Plan in the state.

Staff Contact: Rebecca Joyce

Buena Vista Comp Plan



The Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan Committee is represented by members of the City Council, Planning Commission, residents at-large, Southern Virginia University, and City staff. A representative from the Chamber of Commerce serving Lexington, Buena Vista and Rockbridge County also participated in the plan's development. The Committee has finished its review of the draft plan and

will be forwarding it to the City's Planning Commission and City Council in November for their comments. It is anticipated that the public hearing for the Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan, called Viewpoints, will be held in early 2012.

Staff Contact: Elizabeth McCarty

Building Stronger Communities Workshop

***Building Stronger Communities
DHCD and Communities Working Together
in the Valley***

Tuesday, November 8, 2011

9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Frontier Culture Museum, Staunton

The CSPDC is hosting a forum with presentations by the staff of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). DHCD staff will discuss a variety of activities for which they can provide assistance to localities. These include housing and neighborhood improvements, downtown revitalization, infrastructure improvements, community facilities, entrepreneurship development and economic development initiatives. The forum is geared towards local government leaders, planning and economic development staff, housing and downtown organizations, not-for-profits, and other community leaders. If you are interested in attending the forum, please contact Elizabeth McCarty, Economic Development Planner at 540-885-5174 or at elizabeth@cspdc.org.



Staff Contact: Elizabeth McCarty

Regional Energy Project Advances to Next Phase



Phase I of the Shenandoah Valley Energy Efficiency Program is complete! Municipal facilities in Rockbridge, Bath, Highland, Rockingham and Augusta Counties, and the cities of Lexington, Waynesboro, Buena Vista, and Staunton, as well as the 11

towns in the Region, are part of the program. During this phase, 47 public buildings (totaling 725,277 square feet of space) were audited and an *Energy Conservation Study* for each building prepared and delivered to the respective localities. The *Energy Conservation Study* describes the existing condition of a building's envelope, HVAC system, plumbing system, electrical lighting and power systems, and the historical energy use/costs. It then summarizes all potential energy conservation measures and provides recommended improvements and retrofits that are the most effective in terms of investment and energy efficiency. As this regional program moves into Phase II, each local government will have access to \$22,000 in grant funds to implement the identified improvements and retrofits to their facilities. These implementation funds were recently increased by \$240,000 from the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals, and Energy to allow the localities throughout the Region to more fully invest in their buildings and realize greater energy savings and reduced energy costs.

The grant also provides funding for an educational component designed to teach citizens and local government staff about energy conservation and efficiency programs available. As part of this component, the CSPDC held an *Energy Workshop* on September 21st for local staff to learn about green energy training opportunities from the Shenandoah Valley Energy Partnership. The workshop also included presentations from our contracted energy auditor, Spectrum Design, and workshop participants received information on how to proceed with bidding, contracting, and completion of the project implementation phase. All projects must be completed by April 30, 2012.

Staff Contact: Robbie Huff

Fields of Gold Steering Committee Formed



On September 29 the Fields of Gold steering committee met for the first time to start a yearlong planning process to advance the Region's agritourism initiative, Fields of Gold. This committee is designed to meet regularly throughout the CDBG planning grant process.

Members represent and form recommendations on behalf of the broader stakeholders group, ultimately advancing and guiding this initiative through the planning phase. Furthermore, the twenty-member group is comprised of local producers, business owners and locality staff. Each of the nine participating localities appointed two individuals to serve on the committee.

As Fields of Gold continues to move forward this group will work diligently to carry out the handful of tasks identified in the CDBG planning grant which was awarded by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. These tasks include conducting an asset inventory and developing an economic impact analysis study, marketing plan and business plan.

**Staff Contacts: Elizabeth McCarty and
Monica Plecker**

Broadway Farmers Market Grant Funded

The Town of Broadway has been awarded a \$99,000 RBEG grant to build a farmers market promenade and establish a permanent home for the Broadway Farmers Market. The Broadway Farmers Market has seen a tremendous increase in vendors and customers over the last few years and has outgrown its current location. CSPDC staff assisted the Town of Broadway in the preparation and submittal of its grant application to Rural Development under the Rural Business Enterprise Grant program.



Farmers markets offer economic opportunities for local farmers and entrepreneurs and help improve the local economy.

Staff Contact: Monica Plecker

Water Supply Plans Finalized

For over four years, the Region's 21 jurisdictions have been studying their water resources and water usage to determine water demands in the next 30 years. This study is a requirement of DEQ for all localities to develop water supply plans by November 2011.

The 13 jurisdictions in the Upper Shenandoah River Basin and the 8 jurisdictions in the Upper James Watershed have completed their analysis of their water systems. Each jurisdiction was asked to hold a public hearing and adopt the Plan and drought ordinance prior to DEQ submittal.

Each Plan addresses existing water sources and usage, water conservation, projected water demand and future needs. A drought contingency plan is also part of the overall water supply plan.

**Staff Contacts: Bonnie Riedesel and
Monica Plecker**

Transportation Enhancement Grants

VDOT's Transportation Enhancement (TE) program offers funding opportunities to help expand transportation choices and enhance the transportation experience through 12 eligible activities related to surface transportation, including pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and safety programs, scenic and historic highway programs, landscaping and scenic beautification, historic preservation, and environmental mitigation.



This year, the Planning District Commission (PDC) assisted with the submittal of two Transportation Enhancement grants. The PDC assisted the City of Staunton with an application seeking funding for the Churchville Avenue pedestrian enhancement project. In addition, the PDC assisted Rockbridge County for an area-wide wayfinding signage system that includes the County and the cities of Buena Vista and Lexington.

Augusta County also re-submitted a grant for its Scholastic Way sidewalk/pedestrian improvement project in Stuarts Draft. The deadline this year for the submission of all TE grants was November 1, 2011.

Commission Staff

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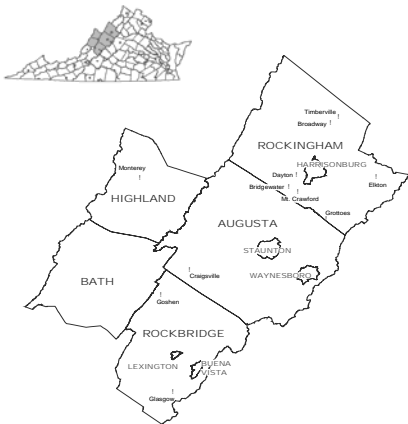
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Central Shenandoah
Planning District

Meetings and Events



- Nov 1: I-81 Corridor Coalition Annual Conference—Blacksburg
- Nov 2: Commonwealth Transportation Board Public Meeting—Broadway
- Nov 3: HRMPO TAC Meeting—Harrisonburg
- Nov 8: Building Stronger Communities Workshop—Frontier Culture Museum
- Nov 9: CERT Advanced Training—CSPDC Office
- Nov 11: Veteran's Holiday—Office Closed
- Nov 16: CERT First Aid Training—CSPDC Office
- Nov 17: HRMPO Policy Board Meeting—Harrisonburg
- Nov 17: HRMPO South Study Public Information Meeting - Bridgewater
- Nov 17: Staunton Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing—Staunton
- Nov 18: SVP Marketing Committee Meeting—CSPDC
- Nov 24-25: Thanksgiving Holiday—Office Closed
- Nov 30: All Hazards Mitigation Plan Public Hearing-CSPDC Office
- Dec 5: CSPDC Board Meeting—CSPDC Office
- Dec 7-9: Virginia Transportation Conference—Norfolk
- Dec 13: Va. Outdoor Plan Public Input Session
- Dec. 13: Bike/Ped Committee Meeting—CSPDC Office
- Dec 16: SVP Marketing Committee Meeting—CSPDC Office
- Dec. 23-26: Christmas Holiday—Office Closed

Staff and Commission News

The Commission welcomes Chris Slaydon representing Rockbridge County as its non-elected representative. Mr. Slaydon is the Assistant Director of Community Development for Rockbridge County.

At its last Board meeting, the Commission recognized the following members for their service on the CSPDC Commission:

Ms. Kay Frye, representing Augusta County since 1997

Ms. Claire Collins, representing Rockbridge County since 2010

Mr. William Kyger, representing Rockingham County since 1988

The following staff positions are available at the CSPDC: Regional Planner and Transportation Planner. For more information on these positions, please visit our website @ www.cspdc.org.

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