



A YEAR IN REVIEW FY 2019

*Celebrating 50 Years of Regionalism*

A large, stylized, light-colored number '50' is overlaid on a photograph of a mountainous landscape. The landscape shows rolling hills with dense forests, some of which are in autumn colors (orange and red), while others are green. The foreground shows some bare trees and a misty or hazy atmosphere. The number '50' is the central focus of the lower half of the page.

*Photo by Warren Faught*





## Our Mission

To help communities and agencies within the Central Shenandoah Valley work together by providing high quality planning, technical assistance, and facilitation services that address local, regional, and state needs in an innovative, timely, and cooperative manner.

## COMMISSIONERS

AS OF JANUARY 1, 2019

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Leslie Tate  
Butch Wells

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Billy Fitzgerald

### HARRISONBURG

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Jay Lewis  
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### ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

Rick Chandler, Secretary \*  
Ned Overton  
Rhonda Cooper  
Kim Sandum

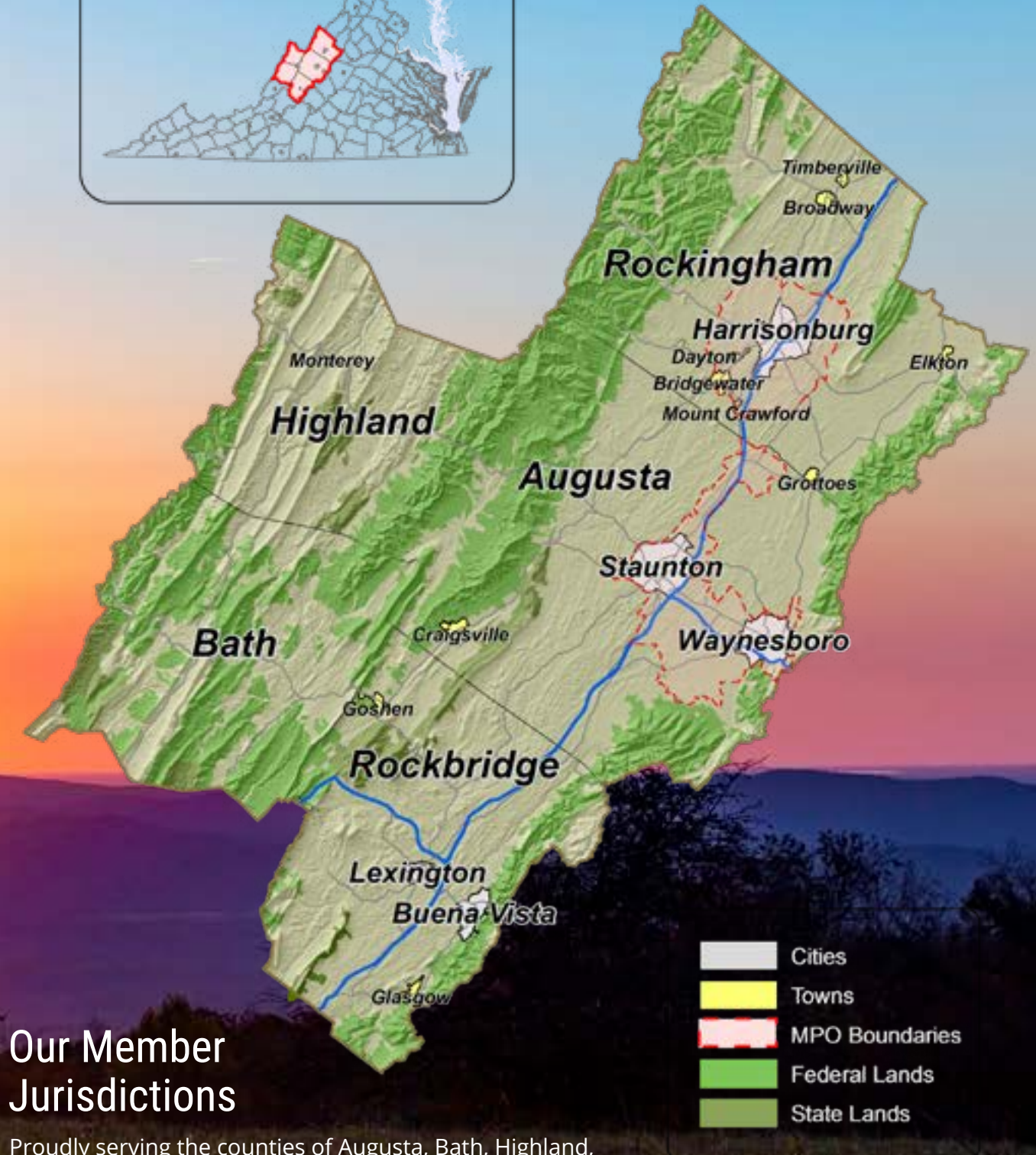
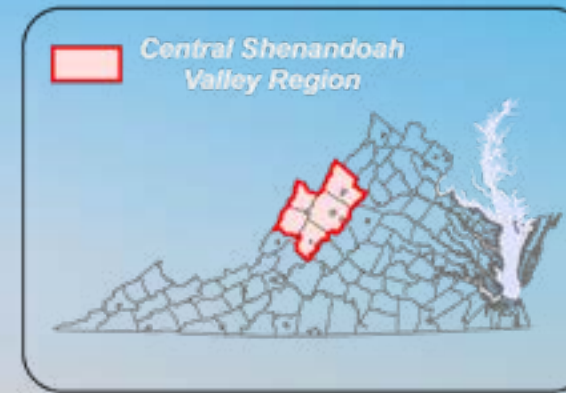
### STAUNTON

Carolyn Dull\*  
Sharon Angle

### WAYNESBORO

Terry Short\*  
Rusty Johnson

\*Executive Committee



## Our Member Jurisdictions

Proudly 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.

*Photo by Warren Faught*





## Bike-Walk Summits

The 7th Harrisonburg-Rockingham Bike-Walk Summit, was held in November 2018. More than 80 attendees representing local elected bodies; community and bicycle advocacy groups; small business owners; and local, regional, and state government staff gathered to brainstorm ways to achieve the community's vision of becoming an even better place to live, bike, walk, work and play. In 2019, Rockingham County was recognized as a Bronze-Level Bike-Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists in time for May's National Bike Month.



In April 2019, the Staunton-Augusta County-Waynesboro (SAW) region held its first Walk-Bike Summit, attracting 60 elected officials, planners, advocates, and public health practitioners. The Summit's mission is to "improve the health, safety, and economy of our community by connecting community partners who want to make Staunton, Augusta County, and Waynesboro a more walk and bike friendly place to live and visit." Attendees set goals and action steps to advance the Summit's mission through their personal and professional work.



## Bike the Valley

Bike the Valley, a regional marketing program that promotes the Shenandoah Valley as a premier bicycling destination, launched a new mobile-ready website in the fall of 2018; bikethevalley.org. Through funding from the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the program has been rebranded to better appeal to the needs of visiting cyclists.

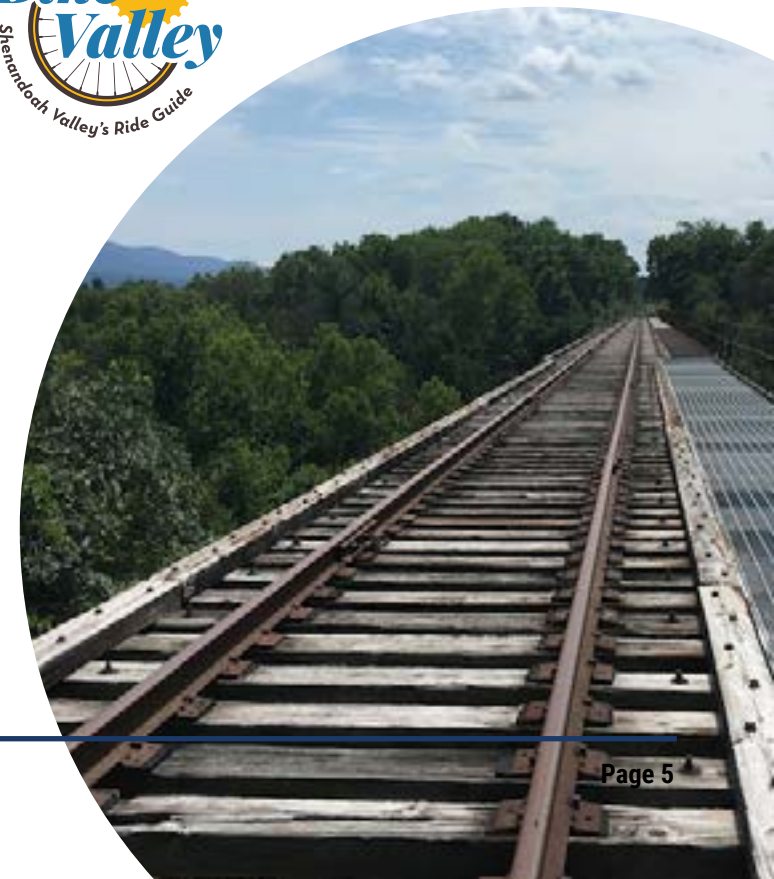
tools to find bike-friendly lodging, local bike shops, and places to have a hearty meal and a beverage after a long ride. Embedded, interactive maps powered by Ride with GPS allow cyclists to view mileage; elevation gains and points of interest along different routes; download routes straight to a GPS device; and print maps and turn-by-turn directions.

The updated website features expanded options for cycling in the Valley, including trip-planning



## Rails to Trails

Town mayors, trail advocates, and state, regional and local government staff gathered in Woodstock, Virginia in February 2019 to create a vision for a 38-mile trail that would link eight towns following a discontinued rail line between the Town of Strasburg in Shenandoah County and the Town of Broadway in Rockingham County. Citizens from the Town of Woodstock incubated the idea and hosted the Summit. Attendees are evaluating the economic feasibility of the trail, and continue to discuss ways to expand local and state government support for the project. The CSPDC is partnering with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission to support the effort.





# BRITE Bus

Now entering its 6th year, BRITE Bus provides fixed route and ADA compliant paratransit transportation service throughout Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County. Routes include the 250 Connector; Stuarts Draft Link; BRCC North and South Shuttles; Waynesboro Circulator; Staunton North & West Loops; and Staunton Downtown Trolley and Saturday Night Trolley.

In 2018, BRITE Bus launched a new mobile-responsive website, [britebus.org](http://britebus.org). The site includes real-time service alerts, schedules, fares, language translation functions, interactive trip planning assistance, and information on all public transit services available in the service area.

To enhance the rider experience, BRITE Bus introduced pre-paid farecards in March 2019. These 12-punch farecards serve as an additional fare payment option, as an alternative to exact change and tokens, and are available in 25 cent or 50 cent increments.

BRITE Bus continues to show strong ridership numbers and proves to be a critical service for people to get to work, school, medical appointments, and other essential services.



## 250 Connector Bus Route

The 250 Connector Route Study examined the BRITE 250 Connector bus route and identified route and stop recommendations that would improve reliability and better serve the transit needs of the riders. The 250 Connector runs between Staunton and Waynesboro along US 250, serving major destinations like Augusta Health, Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center, Walmart stores in Staunton and Waynesboro, Augusta County Library, and Waynesboro Towne Center. The Study recommended a preferred alternative with phased improvements that BRITE will begin implementing in August 2019.

## Virginia Breeze

The Virginia Breeze, an intercity bus, services the I-81 and I-66 corridors. This year, the Virginia Breeze added additional weekend service to its route, allowing riders to make a weekend trip to Washington, D.C. and return home in time for Monday classes and work. The Virginia Breeze makes nine stops along I-81 and I-66 from Blacksburg to Union Station in D.C. Three stops in the CSPDC region include Lexington, Staunton, and Harrisonburg.







## Annual Joint MPO Meeting

Policy Board members from the Charlottesville-Albermarle Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) and the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) held their fourth joint meeting in October 2018, at the BRITE Bus Transit Facility in Fishersville. The two MPOs meet annually to discuss ways to maximize resources and expertise to address transportation issues critical to both MPO regions on the multimodal I-64 corridor. This year, the group discussed rail in the corridor, current Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) projects, and received an update on the restoration of the Crozet Blue Ridge Tunnel.

## Richmond Road Corridor Evaluation

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro MPO, in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Transportation, the City of Staunton, Augusta County, and a team of consultants conducted an operational and safety analysis of Richmond Road (US 250) between the I-81 Exit 222 interchange and Frontier Drive in Staunton. Proposed multimodal improvements will improve safety; develop new facilities for pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit users; and reduce current and anticipated congestion. Study recommendations will be used to guide future transportation investments in the area.

## Port Republic Road Study

In 2018 and 2019, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO and the CSPDC conducted an operational and safety analysis of the Port Republic Road corridor between South Main Street and Devon Lane in Harrisonburg. The Study's main objective was to improve safety and reduce travel times in this primary corridor. The results of the Study provided decision makers and the public with recommendations for projects to implement as funding is available. Since the Study's acceptance by Harrisonburg City Council in May 2019, the City has already begun to implement low-cost, short-term improvements such as access management signage.

## I-81 Improvements

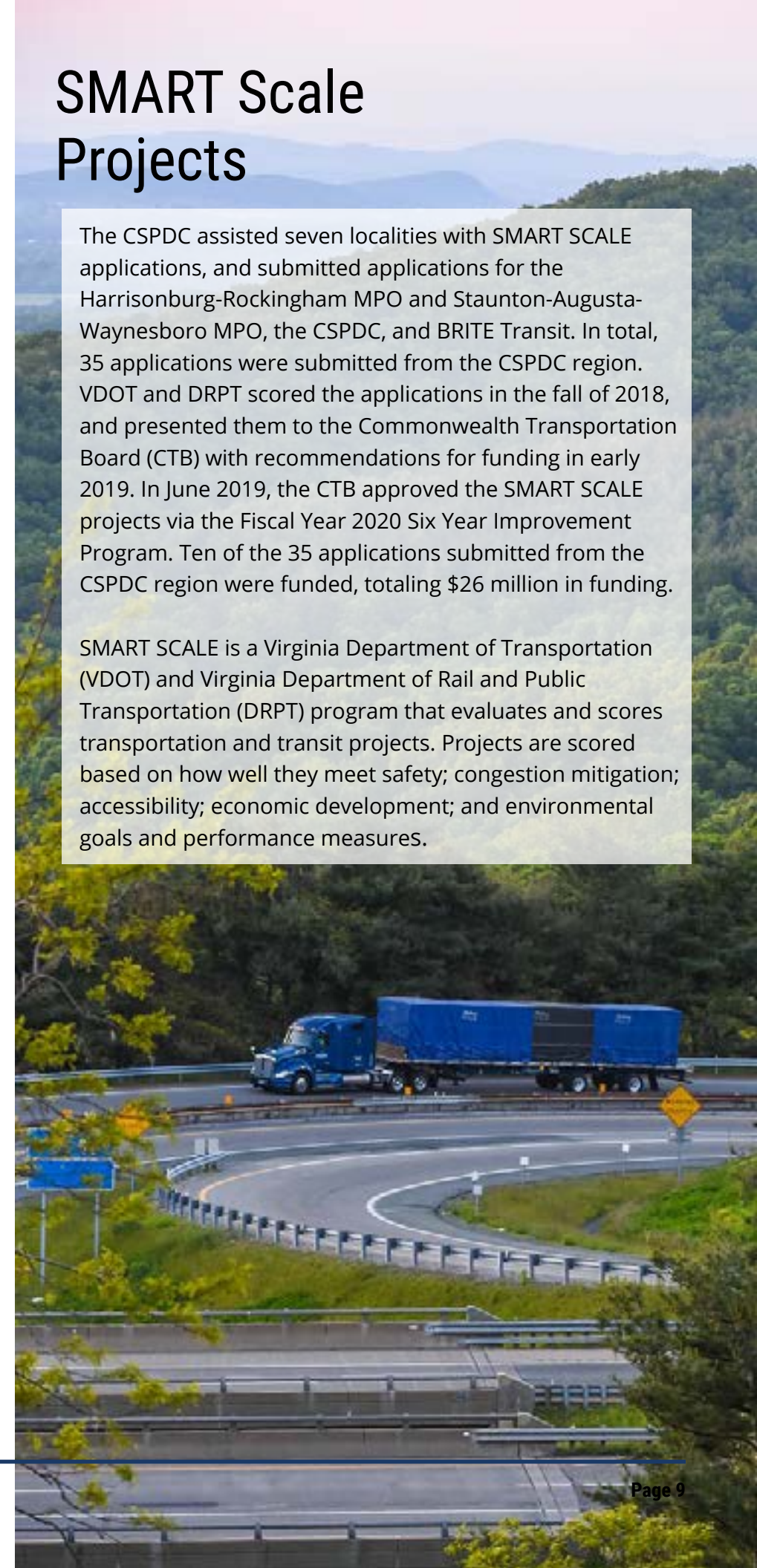
In April 2019, the General Assembly approved the I-81 Improvement Program and Improvement Fund, including the creation of a 15-member I-81 Advisory Committee to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). The I-81 Program will generate \$151 million per year in new revenue for improvements to I-81 through increased tractor-trailer registration fees and road taxes that trucks pay to travel the corridor, an increase in the state diesel tax, and an increase in the wholesale motor fuels tax along the I-81 corridor.

With passage of the programming and funding bills, the State will be able to issue bonds and prioritize I-81 Improvement Plan projects for construction. The five Planning District Commission Chairs from the I-81 Corridor will serve on the Advisory Committee, which will make project priority recommendations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The CSPDC provided resolutions of support from the Commission and MPO Policy Boards for the Program, and will continue to support the PDC Chair's participation in the I-81 Advisory Committee.

## SMART Scale Projects

The CSPDC assisted seven localities with SMART SCALE applications, and submitted applications for the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO and Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro MPO, the CSPDC, and BRITE Transit. In total, 35 applications were submitted from the CSPDC region. VDOT and DRPT scored the applications in the fall of 2018, and presented them to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) with recommendations for funding in early 2019. In June 2019, the CTB approved the SMART SCALE projects via the Fiscal Year 2020 Six Year Improvement Program. Ten of the 35 applications submitted from the CSPDC region were funded, totaling \$26 million in funding.

SMART SCALE is a Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) program that evaluates and scores transportation and transit projects. Projects are scored based on how well they meet safety; congestion mitigation; accessibility; economic development; and environmental goals and performance measures.





# Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP III)

In 2018, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) began Phase III of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP III). The State is required to submit a plan to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that ensures pollution control measures needed to fully restore the Bay are in place no later than 2025. DEQ submitted their draft plan to the EPA this past year and will submit the final WIP III plan in August 2019.

DEQ contracted with the CSPDC, and other Bay PDCs across the state, to work with their localities and stakeholders in the region to identify Best Management Practices (BMPs), programmatic actions, and explore ways to implement BMPs. The CSPDC's WIP III planning process began in June 2018, and continues to assist with collaborative activities, training opportunities, grant and funding research, GIS data collection, and WIP III marketing.

# Recycle Rate Reporting

The annual recycle rate report for the Augusta-Staunton-Waynesboro Solid Waste Planning Unit was submitted to DEQ in April 2019. There is a requirement for localities with a density of more than 100 people per square mile to meet a 25% recycle rate annually. The CSPDC collected the recycling tonnages for the

area and determined the 2018 recycling rate for the Augusta County area to be 34%. This report is expected to be approved by DEQ this year.

Additionally, CSPDC staff assisted the Augusta County Service Authority in updating its Solid Waste Management Plan, due every five years.

# Solar in the Valley

In June 2019, the Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley and the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission co-sponsored a workshop on utility-scale solar projects. The Shenandoah Valley is seeing a surge in applications for utility-scale solar projects and localities need to be prepared with land use ordinances, site development standards, fee structures and impact analysis. The workshop aimed to help localities understand potential issues and develop the policies and procedures to respond to these large and complex proposals. Workshop speakers brought experience from across the state.





# Mobility Management Resource Guide

The CSPDC was awarded a grant from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation for a short-term Mobility Management program in July 2017. The program goals were to provide coordination of existing transportation providers, establish a central access point for human service providers, and assess current gaps in

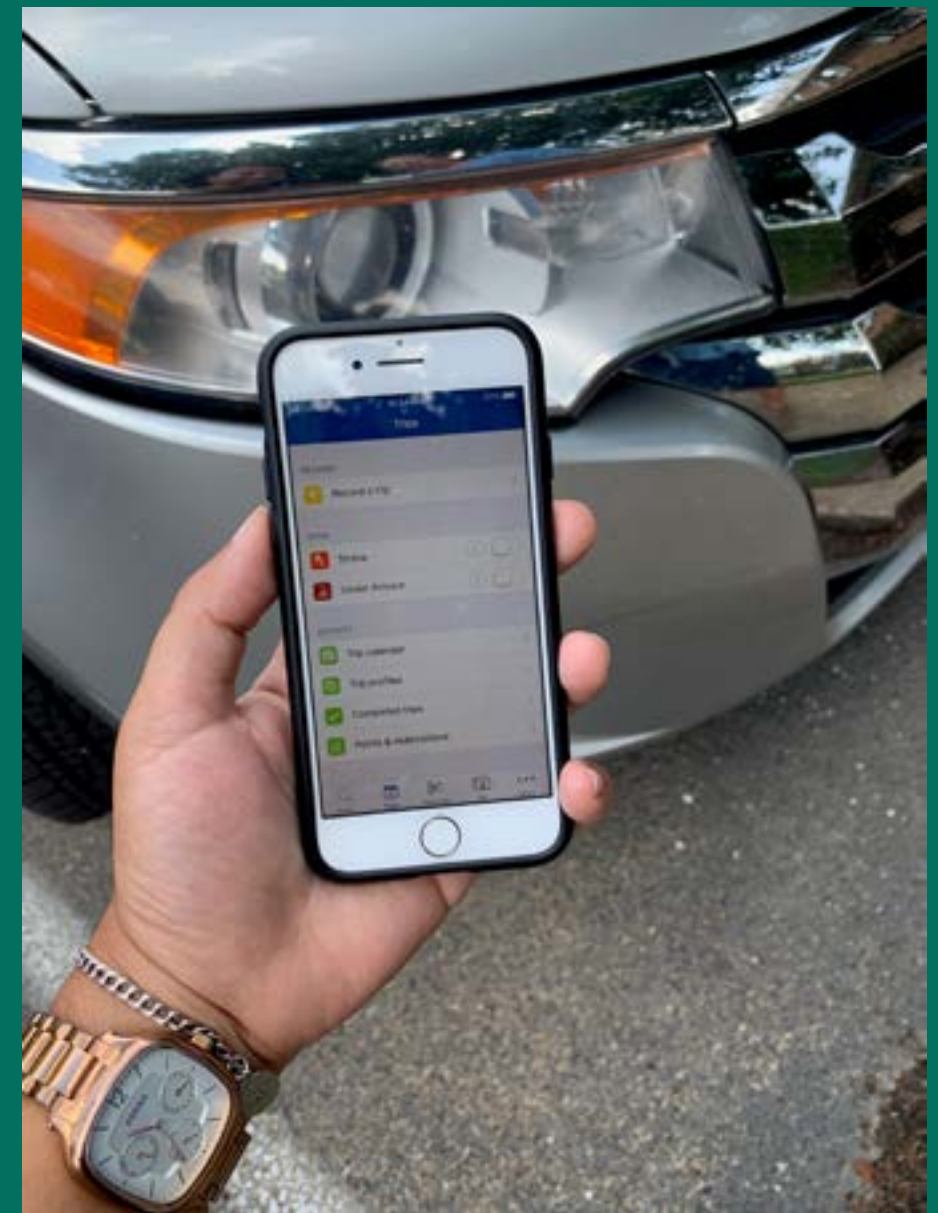
transportation services in the region. The grant culminated in March 2019. One of the program deliverables was a Mobility Management Resource Guide that provides a central location to obtain information on various transportation and transit providers in the region and to

help increase resource sharing among the agencies that provide these services. The guide includes contact information, service area, population served, and transportation services provided. The guide is posted on the CSPDC website and was distributed to transportation and human service agencies throughout the region.

# RideShare

RideShare is a program of the CSPDC that provides outreach and other services to reduce single-occupant vehicles on the road by facilitating the use of alternative transportation, such as carpooling, walking, biking, and using transit.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, in partnership with five VA commuter assistance programs, launched Commute!VA, a new ride matching and commuter rewards service available to those who travel within the Commonwealth. Commuters can discover all of the multimodal transportation options available, including finding rides to carpools or van pools, finding bus and other transit services and stops, finding park and ride locations, and finding bike share locations.





# 50

## Years of Service ...

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission. In 1968, the Virginia State Legislature passed the Virginia Area Development Act which set forth the framework for the establishment of regional planning district commissions throughout the state, and on October 1, 1969, the CSPDC was organized.

Over the past five decades, the region's population has increased 61.8%, going from 186,306 in 1970 to an estimated 301,485 in 2018. The region gained the most residents (33,738) between 1990 and 2000. Although population increases have slowed since 2010, the region still displays healthy and steady growth patterns.

The City of Harrisonburg, with an astounding 274% increase, gained more people than any other locality in the region since 1970 and was designated a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) following the 2000 U.S. Census. Ten years later, following the 2010 Census, the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro area was designated an MSA. As it was in 1969, Rockingham County is the CSPDC's most populated locality, while Highland County remains the lowest populated locality with 2,265 people.

When Planning Districts' formed in 1969, the highway system in the Central Shenandoah Valley was just beginning to resemble what we know today. The last segment of Interstate 81 to be constructed in the CSPDC region,

from Stuarts Draft to Harrisonburg, opened that same year. Interstate 64 from Staunton to Afton Mountain was completed shortly after in 1971. The completion of the interstate network brought the expansion of highway trucking that transformed the national economy, and set in motion a trend that is still being concentrated on today.

Over the past 50 years, the CSPDC has assisted localities with a variety of community development programs, housing studies, and funding applications that provide safe, livable housing and access to public utilities. Projects throughout the region have included rehabbing substandard housing; replacing or installing new water, sewer, and indoor plumbing; drainage systems; relocating homes outside of flood zones; and providing low-interest mortgage loans and down payment assistance to first time home buyers.

The work of the CSPDC over the past 50 years continues to improve the economic vitality of the region and the quality of life of its citizens.



Commissioners in 1971 from left to right: Commission Chairman, Charles Phillips; Commissioners Lyle Koogler, Roy Cleek, C.N. Wine, John Moyers, and the first CSPDC Executive Director, Ed Parcha.

Flooding in the Town of Glasgow from Hurricane Camille, 1969



House under construction through the Buck Hill Community Improvement Project in 1995



I-81 Construction in 1969

Buena Vista Interior Drainage Project in 1999





# GO Virginia Region 8

GO Virginia is a business-led, Commonwealth-supported economic development initiative that encourages Virginia's diverse regions to collaborate on economic and workforce development activities. The Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board, responsible for overseeing the implementation of the GO Virginia program, awards allotted funds to nine Regional Councils who submit project applications to the Board for approval. GO Virginia is supported and administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

GO Virginia Region 8 is an area covering 10 counties and 6 cities stretching from Lexington to Winchester. CSPDC staff provides support to the Region 8 Council and assists with GO Virginia project development, applications, and project administration. There have been five projects funded to date, totaling \$1M in Region 8, three of them in the CSPDC region.

**Rockbridge Area Advanced Manufacturing Project (RAAMP)** is preparing a pipeline of skilled welders for manufacturing companies throughout Region 8.

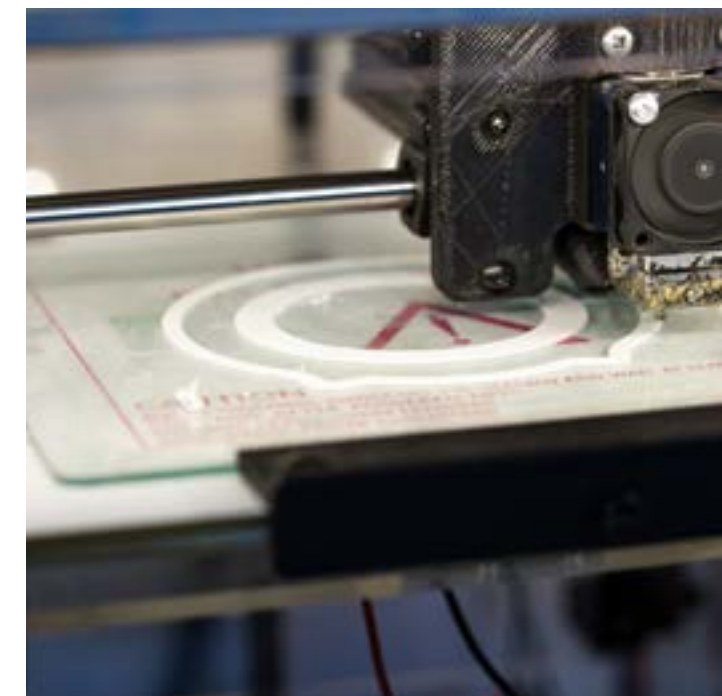
Byers Technical Institute (BTI), a new technical training center in Rockbridge County, partnered with the City of Buena Vista and the Rockbridge County Economic Development Authority to bring this project to fruition. BTI offers a 40-week advanced welding program to prepare students to enter the welding field at the Journeyman level. A \$100,000 GO Virginia grant is supporting the expansion of this program by providing funding for instructors and training equipment.

**Cyber Security Workforce Development and Jobs Program - Blue Ridge Community College** was awarded a \$200,000 GO Virginia grant to launch a cyber security training program. The cities of Waynesboro and Harrisonburg are the partnering localities. This non-credit training offers industry credentials and helps establish high-wage, high-demand cyber security jobs in the region. Following their classroom training, students participate in hands-on training with Shenandoah Valley IT consulting firms by performing basic cyber risk assessments.



**Tech-Lab Feasibility Study - The Staunton Innovation Hub (SIH)** is working with area partners to create a student-entrepreneur-maker-space. This shared workspace is intended to teach creative and collaborative ways to use innovative equipment such as laser cutters, 3D printers, robotics and electronics. The City of Staunton and Page County are the participating localities. SIH received a \$23,000 GO Virginia grant to determine the need, potential impact, and implementation details of this concept including needed tools and equipment, support staff, curriculum and programming. The study will evaluate the feasibility of a bricks and mortar facility as well as a mobile lab space that could travel throughout the region's rural communities.

## GO Virginia Regions







## Greenhouse Village

Phase II of an affordable housing project is underway in the Greenhouse Village neighborhood of Rockbridge County. The County partnered with Rockbridge Area Habitat for Humanity to construct 12 new homes and build infrastructure for roads, water and sewer to develop the neighborhood. This will bring the total number of Habitat homes in the neighborhood to 27, and the infrastructure will also allow Habitat to build 8 more homes in the future. Habitat typically builds 4 homes a year, one of which is a modular home built by students at Rockbridge County High School. The project is funded through the Community Development Block Grant Program, and the CSPDC provides grant administration services.

## Bath County Housing Plan

Bath County has identified housing as a priority for economic development, including opportunities for rental housing and homeownership, and the goal is to enhance and expand opportunities for affordable workforce housing in the County.

In support of these efforts, Bath County was awarded a \$20,000 Community Impact Grant from the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) in December 2018. Funding will be used to procure a consultant to conduct a county-wide housing needs assessment and market analysis report. A Project Team of stakeholders has been organized to oversee the project and is in the process of selecting a consultant to begin work in August 2019. The CSPDC will provide grant administration and management services for the project.

## First-Time Homebuyer Program

The HOME Down Payment Assistance Program in the Central Shenandoah Valley region received annual funding to assist approximately eight first-time, low-to-moderate income homebuyers in 2019. Since its creation in 1999, this program has helped over 250 people in our region obtain safe and affordable housing while growing their personal wealth and equity through homeownership. The CSPDC partners with lenders and housing providers in the area to identify eligible homebuyers.



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Addison Patch Farm



Ratliff's Blueberry Farm



Big Bend Farm



The Shack



Rockbridge Vineyards

## Fields of Gold



Since its creation in 2011, the Fields of Gold Farm Trail has grown to include 230 agritourism business members representing agricultural venues, farm stands, farmers markets, grocery and retail stores, plant nurseries, on-farm experiences, farm lodges, farm-to-table restaurants, and wineries and breweries.

Fields of Gold members Laurel Fork Sapsuckers, Meadow Croft Farm, Mountain View Farm, Rockbridge Vineyards, and Showalter's Orchard were featured among other Shenandoah Valley farmers in *The Furrow's* March 2019 issue. *The Furrow* is the United States edition of the worldwide farm magazine published in 12 languages by John Deere & Company and distributed to over 50,000 John Deere equipment owners across the country. The article entitled *Oh Shenandoah; A Place Where Farmers Gladly Welcome Visitors*, discusses the region's agricultural heritage, product diversity and the Fields of Gold Farm Trail program.

## Farm2Fork Affair

Over 50 Shenandoah Valley agricultural producers, including 14 Fields of Gold members, exhibited their products during the Farm2Fork Affair in March 2019. Buyers representing restaurants, universities, hospitals, and retail stores throughout Virginia, West Virginia, and Washington D.C. were able to sample and source products from this rich agricultural region. The event was hosted by a collaborative effort of regional economic development and tourism departments with support from the CSPDC.

Prior to the Farm2Fork Affair event, a Ready Workshop was held that provided guidance on creating a professional presentation and developing working relationship with potential clients.



Harrisonburg Farmers Market

## Tour de Farm

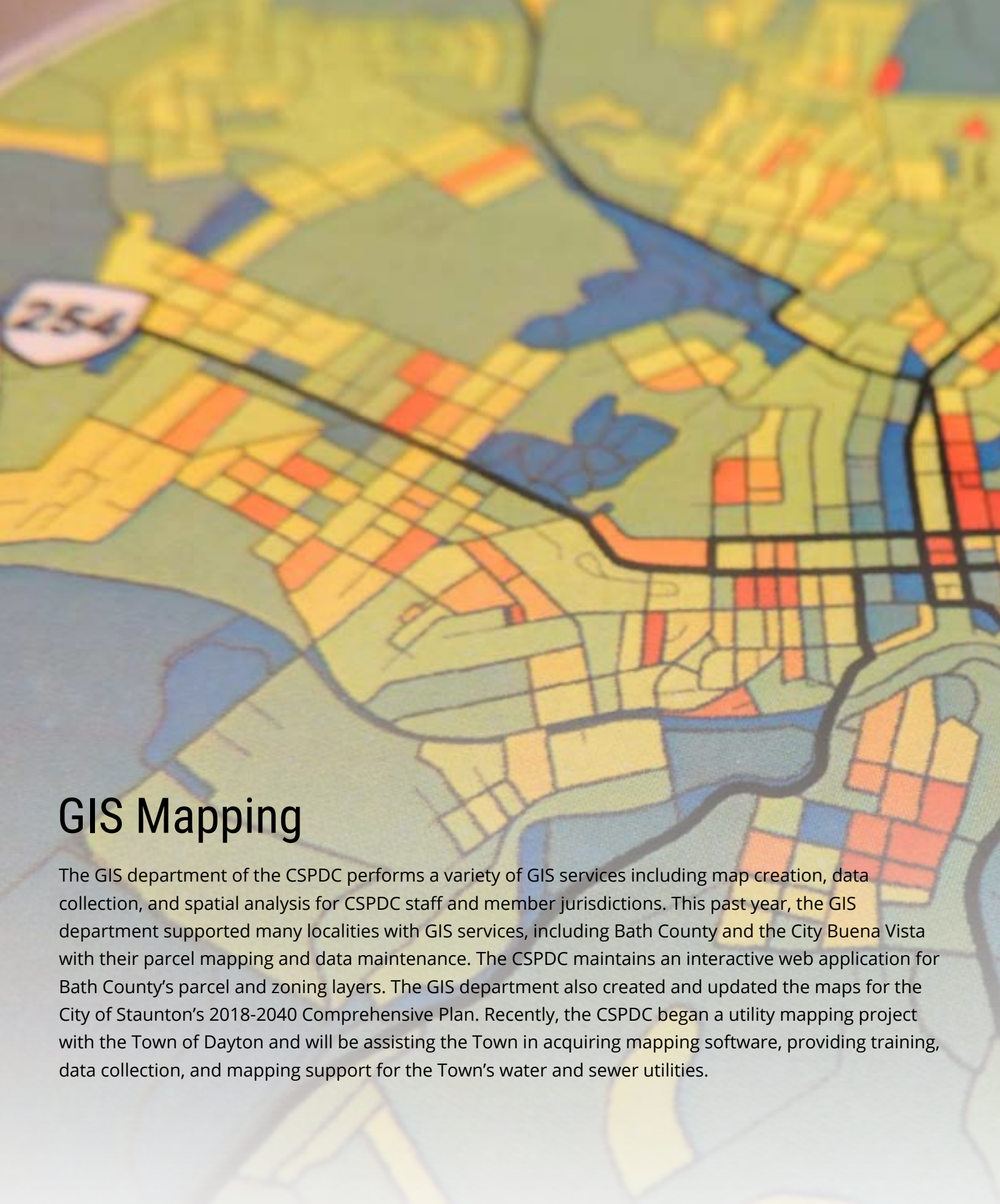
Tour de Farm is a developing bike-to-farm program that combines the Bike the Valley and Fields of Gold programs, both administered by the CSPDC, and guided by a working group of bicyclists, Fields of Gold members, tourism staff, and community leaders. The working group is identifying and mapping routes, determining potential farm stops along routes, creating a marketing plan, and identifying funding opportunities.

In October 2018, the Tour de Farm logo was unveiled. Pulling elements from both the Fields

of Gold and Bike the Valley logos, the Tour de Farm logo is comprised of a bicycle wheel tread encircling the Blue Ridge Mountains, a rooster in the foreground, and a Tour de Farm ribbon with a bike gear as a focal point. Ultimately, Tour de Farm route and event information will be available on both Bike the Valley and Fields of Gold websites and widely marketed and promoted.

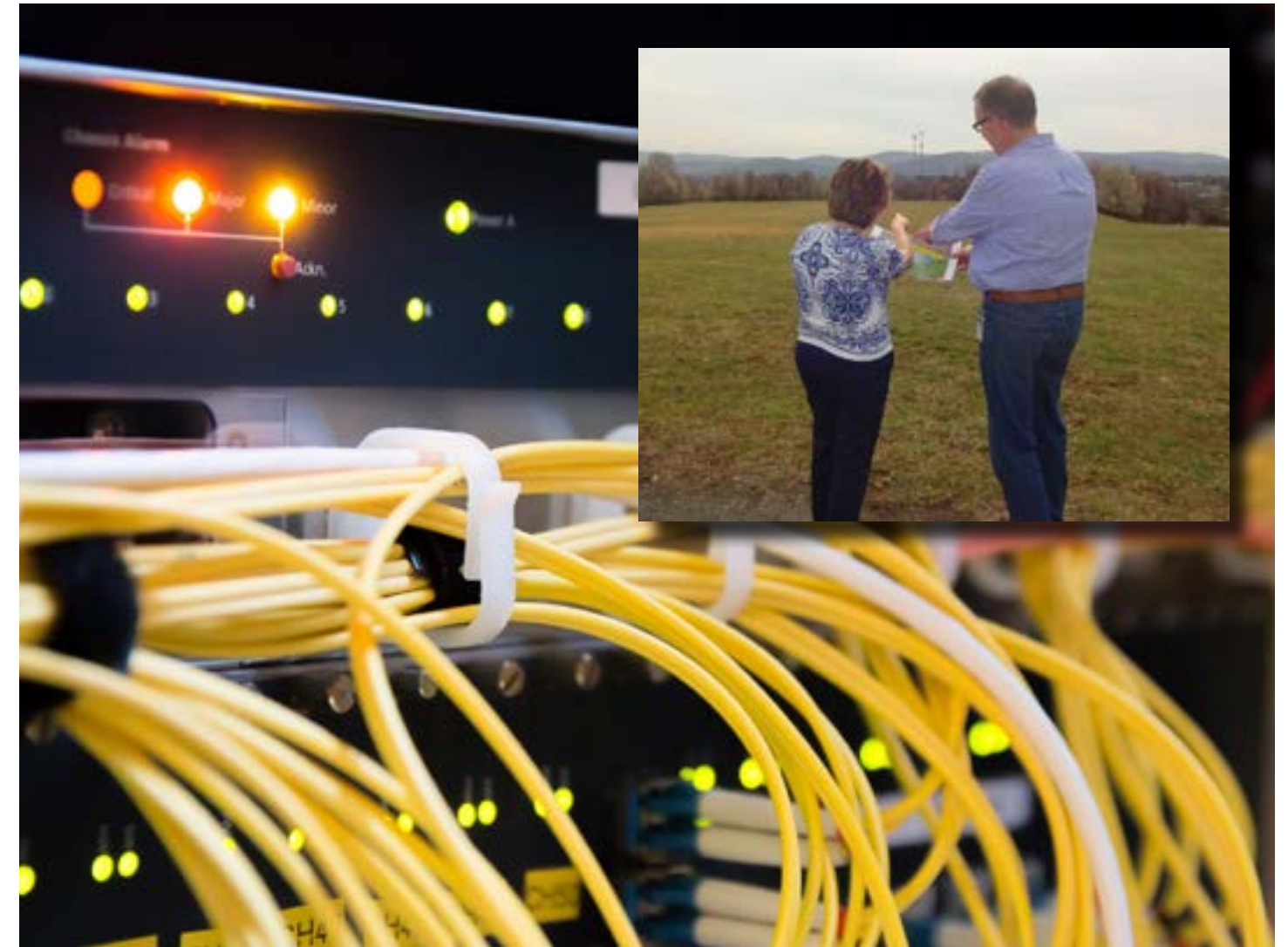






## GIS Mapping

The GIS department of the CSPDC performs a variety of GIS services including map creation, data collection, and spatial analysis for CSPDC staff and member jurisdictions. This past year, the GIS department supported many localities with GIS services, including Bath County and the City Buena Vista with their parcel mapping and data maintenance. The CSPDC maintains an interactive web application for Bath County's parcel and zoning layers. The GIS department also created and updated the maps for the City of Staunton's 2018-2040 Comprehensive Plan. Recently, the CSPDC began a utility mapping project with the Town of Dayton and will be assisting the Town in acquiring mapping software, providing training, data collection, and mapping support for the Town's water and sewer utilities.



## Bath-Highland Broadband Authority

Reliable high-speed Internet access is now essential for businesses, education, healthcare, emergency services, and the daily activities of residents. In response to this need, the Bath-Highland Network Authority was created in 2017 to seek broadband solutions and funding opportunities for the counties of Bath and Highland. The Authority is made up of representatives from Bath County, Highland County, and the Town of Monterey and held its first organizational meeting in January 2019. The CSPDC acts as fiscal agent and provides staff support to the Authority.

## On-Call Consultants

The On-Call Consultant Program was established in 2012 by the CSPDC to facilitate quick delivery of professional services in the areas of transportation, civil engineering, environmental, and general planning services to its member jurisdictions. Since the program's inception, 33 projects totaling over \$1.5 million have been funded through the On-Call Consultant program. The six qualified consulting firms are:

- A. Morton Thomas & Associates
- Draper Aden Associates
- Hurt & Proffitt
- Kimley-Horn
- Timmons Group
- Vanasse Hangen Brustlin



# Opportunity Zones

Opportunity Zones are a new revitalization tool resulting from the Federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. The zones allow investors to receive tax benefits on currently unrealized capital gains by investing those gains in low-income census tracts that were nominated by the Governor and designated as Opportunity Zones by the U.S. Treasury. Virginia has a total of 212 census tracts that are Opportunity Zones. Ten designated Opportunity Zones are located in the CSPDC region.

As the regulations for this new program were unfolding, the CSPDC collaboratively held an informational workshop in December 2018. Staff of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the Commonwealth's coordinating agency for Opportunity Zones, presented an overview of the federal program. More recently, an online marketplace was developed to help educate stakeholders on the program, share project ideas and pipelines, and connect investors to business and property in Virginia's Opportunity Zones. The Opportunity Zone program and this online platform are designed to encourage long-term, positive investments in Virginia's distressed and low-income communities.



# Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

One of the CSPDC's primary responsibilities as an Economic Development District is to prepare a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS program analyzes a region's economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources.

A project team was created this past year and worked with CSPDC staff and consultants to update the region's CEDS. This included an in-depth overview of the region's economy, SWOT analysis, and a strategic direction/action plan. The CEDS update was a collaborative process and involved participation by the CSPDC Board and local economic development staff and partners. The CEDS was approved by the CSPDC Board in October 2018, and submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration for approval.

The CEDS can be found on the CSPDC website at [www.cspdc.org](http://www.cspdc.org).





# All Hazards Mitigation Plan

The CSPDC received funds from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to update the Central Shenandoah Hazards Mitigation Plan. The updated plan, originally approved in 2006 and last updated in 2013, is now anticipated to be adopted by the 21 jurisdictions in the Central Shenandoah Planning District in early 2020. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) requires that local governments develop and adopt Hazard Mitigation Plans that are updated every five years in order to receive hazard mitigation grant funds.

During the update process, hazards are examined, risks assessed, and mitigation options such as local planning/regulations, structure and infrastructure projects, and education/awareness programs are identified to proactively protect our community. A group of students enrolled in the School of Integrated Sciences at James Madison University spent the spring semester assisting with this update process by providing research related to climate adaption, land use, changes to climate and weather patterns, hazard profiles and recommendations, and social impacts in the region.



## Community Emergency Reponse Team

Over the past 16 years, the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) has been focused on community education, preparedness, and safety. At the foundation of the program is a seven-week training course, offered annually in the fall and spring, to prepare volunteers on how to assist with community emergencies and mitigation education. This required course includes topics

such as fire safety, emergency first aid, disaster psychology, and terrorism awareness. Since its establishment, CERT has trained over 1,000 volunteers in our region.

This year, CERT volunteers assisted the Augusta County Fire-Rescue firefighters to install free smoke alarms in mobile homes and at mobile home parks throughout Augusta County, participated in an

emergency response exercise at the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport, and were on standby when Hurricane Florence hit the East Coast in September 2018. CERT volunteers were also involved with community education programs at the "Touch-a-Truck" event sponsored by Augusta County Fire-Rescue, the Dooms Fire Department's Kids Fun Day, and the Green Valley Book Fair's Safety Day.

## Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan

Since 2002, CSPDC staff have been providing assistance to our member localities in Emergency Management Planning. This fiscal year, the CSPDC has been working on two Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plans (HMERPs) – a regional one for Staunton, Waynesboro, and Augusta County, and one for Bath County. Since

the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (a free-standing law commonly known as SARA Title III), local communities are required to create and keep an updated HMERP. The HMERP includes current information on chemicals used by area industries and identifies vulnerable facilities such as schools or nursing homes that

are close to those facilities. Essential information about local emergency response capabilities for responding to hazardous materials incidents that happen at industrial sites and during transport are also included in the HMERP. The Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Plan is an important tool localities have to keep their citizens safe.



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**hrmpo**



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**rideSHARE**

