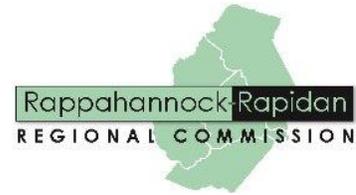


## Executive Director's Report June 17, 2021



The purpose of this monthly report is to provide members of the Regional Commission with a summary report of work plan-related activities, staff attendance and participation at local/regional/statewide meetings, and updates on initiatives impacting the Regional Commission and our localities.

### Administration:

- I offer sincere thanks to Ms. Sutphin, Ms. Schaeffer, and Town of Warrenton staff for their support in logistics for today's meeting.
- The Commission is currently advertising for two open positions – Farm to School Liaison and AmeriCorps VISTA Member. Full description and application materials are available at [https://www.rregion.org/about\\_us/employment\\_opportunities.php](https://www.rregion.org/about_us/employment_opportunities.php).
- Staff completed compliance reviews for our Mobility Management program with Department of Rail and Public Transportation staff in May, as well as a financial compliance review for all DRPT programs during May and June, with no significant findings communicated from DRPT.
- Commission staff heard from ICMA-RC financial specialist at one of our May staff meetings regarding services offered through our VRS participation.

### Transportation

- Staff has completed field work for the Town of Washington sidewalk assessment and will have a summary report in draft form in July.
- Commuter Services staff supported Bike Month and Bike to Work week in May with outreach efforts targeting Culpeper and Warrenton. Materials were distributed to bike shops, public locations and via social media. Interested individuals completed survey regarding transportation to work and ability to utilize bicycle commuting within and around the region's two largest towns. This was the first effort of this type in several years and plans are in process to increase the outreach in 2022.
- The Culpeper Small Area Plan technical assistance funded through the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment begins with a data and discovery meeting on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. Staff is working closely with County staff to coordinate meetings and timeline for the nine-month project.

### Homelessness & Regional Housing

- Commission staff worked with Culpeper Housing and Shelter Services, Culpeper Police, Culpeper Human Services and numerous community groups to respond to the recent flooding event at Sleepy Hollow Motel in Culpeper. My thanks to Rebecca Wareham for her coordination efforts, as well as Monica Creel (and her husband) for use of a trailer to transport donations to CHASS for distribution to those displaced households, many of whom are being housed by CHASS in hotels as part of the non-congregate shelter program for Foothills Housing Network.
- With the approval of the Chair, staff submitted an application to Virginia Housing for the PDC Housing Development Program, and Mr. John Payne will be present to speak on the goals of the program and Virginia Housing's (formerly VHDA) work at the meeting. Staff will also provide additional framework materials for the Commission's consideration. All 21

Commissions across Virginia submitted an application indicating interest in developing the program within their respective regions.

- Staff is wrapping up additional document production related to the Regional Housing Study. Follow-on information completed internally includes field work in Gordonsville, Remington, Orange, Culpeper and Warrenton, as well as white paper style documents relating to common issues raised in response to housing development.

### **Environmental/Natural Resources**

- Staff continues to coordinate with 4P Foods on food processing and food insecurity distribution opportunities. American Rescue Plan funding may present an opportunity to address previously identified infrastructure needs related to food processing.
- The Land Use & Environment Committee met in May and heard from Chesapeake Conservancy regarding the BMP prioritization tool that is being developed under the NFWF Small Watershed grant. The next meeting is on August 19<sup>th</sup>, with Department of Environmental Quality staff presenting on erosion & sediment control and stormwater management for utility scale solar projects.

### **Economic Development & Tourism**

- Staff has participated in various webinars and information sessions related to the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) program. If your locality is planning to submit an application, please let us know if we can provide any support to your efforts, or if there is reason to consider a regional project with your identified private sector partners.
- We convened a meeting with local economic development staff and have support for moving forward with a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan application in FY 2022. There is potential to leverage American Rescue Plan funding to support these efforts, as well.

### **Emergency Planning & Hazard Mitigation**

- The regional wildfire analysis project is advancing, with staff continuing to run new data sources through the model process. We expect a draft report document available for review by the end of 2021.

### **Local Technical Assistance**

- Staff are pursuing opportunities for enhancing our partnership and collaboration with the Rappahannock-Rapidan Health District. Opportunities primarily center around transportation, outreach efforts with RRHD staff, as well as GIS and mapping support.
- Supported Fauquier County's procurement for legislative services and are working to coordinate regional legislative services included within the County's RFP.
- Responded to request from Town of Washington to serve as pass-through fiscal agent related to funding from the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation
- Continued discussions with LOVE Orange Virginia on their Downtown Strategies plan process and tie-ins with Regional Housing Study and other Regional Commission projects
- Participated in a Virginia Cooperative Extension-led discovery meeting related to a coordinated data collection effort in Rappahannock County
- Participation and support for Carver Center workgroup and regional food processing/food insecurity activities through the RRRC Food Council