

Regional Progress

An Annual Report of Activities on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

Fiscal Year 2001-2002

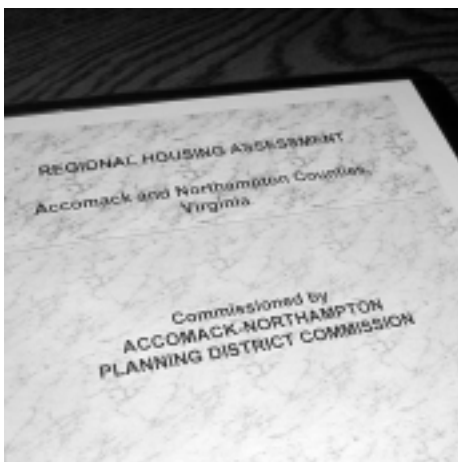
Accomack-Norhampton Planning District Commission -- Eastern Shore of Virginia Economic Development Commission -- Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Service Authority -- Accomack-Norhampton Housing and Redevelopment Corporation -- Accomack-Norhampton Regional Housing Authority -- Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Partnership

Regional Housing Assessment Completed

The first phase of a regional housing strategic plan, the *Regional Housing Assessment*, was completed in June 2002. The assessment was prepared by housing consultants Mullin & Lonergan and overseen by a regional Advisory Committee appointed by the A-NPDC.

The assessment noted housing assets in the region, including affordable homes for sale, low tax burden and cost of living, new assisted housing developments, high percent of owner-occupied housing, and public transit service. Identified liabilities included inadequate water and sewer service, undersupply of rental housing, over 700 homes lacking indoor plumbing, and insufficient homeless services.

A workshop of housing providers and consumers will be convened in February 2003 to develop plans to address the needs identified by the assessment.



Bridge-Tunnel Commuter Study Recognized



A-NPDC Executive Director Paul Berge, Accomack County Administrator Keith Bull, Northampton County Supervisor Jack White, Delegate Bob Bloxom, Northampton County Supervisor Suzanne Westcoat, Northampton County Administrator Lance Metzler, and Senator Nick Rerras accept the VAPA Award

The Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association awarded the *Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel Commuter Toll Impact Study* a 2002 Outstanding Planning Award in March 2002. The award cited "the extraordinary community effort and planning process that provided an early warning of the far reaching impacts on the rural Eastern Shore community of a new commuter toll."

The study, completed in November 2001, estimated an increase of 6,000 families over the next 25 years due to the new toll that started in March 2002. The positive and negative effects of this growth on land consumption, traffic, tourism, economy, schools, tax

base, and environmental resources were identified. The study recommended regional and local strategies to address this growth.

Accepting the Planning Award, Suzanne Westcoat, chair of the regional committee that oversaw the study, thanked county and private sponsors, regional leaders, state legislators, and planning consultants that provided support. "Most importantly, we want to thank the hundreds of Eastern Shore people that came out for rallies, workshops, public hearings and meetings of public bodies to say that, through sound planning and ample public input, we will have a voice in this decision that can so significantly affect our future."

Virginia Coastal Birding and Wildlife Trail Dedicated

The Virginia Coastal Birding and Wildlife Trail was dedicated by Virginia Game and Inland Fisheries Department Director William Woodfin on October 4, 2002 during the 10th Annual Eastern Shore Birding Festival. The Birding Trail includes over 150 sites on 18 driving route “loops” from Great Falls to Chincoteague.

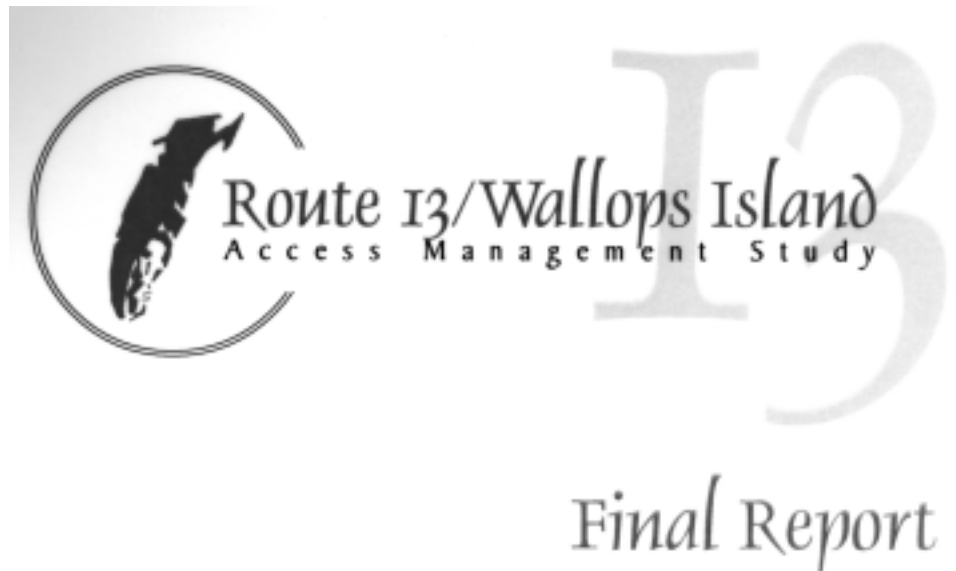
The Eastern Shore Loop has 18 sites in Accomack and Northampton. Copies of the 100-page *Virginia Coastal Birding and Wildlife Trail Guide* can be requested through the Virginia Tourism Corporation by calling 1-866-VABIRDS.



Guard Shore Marsh

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VDOT Presents Final U.S. Route 13 Recommendations

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has completed the U.S. Route 13 / Wallops Island Access Management Study and presented its final recommendations to the Accomack County Board of Supervisors, the Northampton County Board of Supervisors, and the A-NPDC. The study recommends \$139.3 million worth of improvements to U.S. Route 13 and Route 175 over the next 20 years, including \$7 million in short-term safety improvements.

The recommendations include corridor-wide policy actions and physical improvements, as well as site-specific highway improvements in both counties. Corridor-wide policy actions include adoption of access management guidelines by VDOT, adoption of conceptual highway plans by local governments, and adoption of highway corridor overlay zoning district ordinances by local governments.

“Access Management” refers to a variety of techniques for improving roadway safety to reduce highway congestion, including safer standards for

commercial development, consolidating entrances and driveways, adding turn lanes, modifying medians, eliminating or adding crossovers, adding or synchronizing traffic lights, and constructing alternative roadways. Short-term corridor-wide safety improvements include installing shoulder rumble strips, raised pavement markers, mile markers, turn lanes, and safer drainage structures.

Site-specific physical improvements also include short-term and long-term goals. Long-term projects include paved shoulders and turn lanes on Route 175; a U.S. Route 13 by-pass from Oak Hall to Temperanceville; relocating the railroad and building medians in Melfa, Keller, Painter, and Nassawadox; and building an overpass at Cape Charles. Short-term projects include clearing vegetation, improving intersections, widening medians, and constructing frontage roads in densely developed areas.

The U.S. Route 13 / Wallops Island Access Management Study, maps, and aerial photos can be reviewed online at www.virginiadot.org.

Draft Ground Water Ordinance Presented to Counties

The Eastern of Virginia Ground Water Committee presented the Draft Eastern Shore Ground Water Ordinance to Accomack County and Northampton County during FY 2002. The counties are considering adoption of the ordinance.

If adopted by the counties, the ordinance would require central water supplies for large residential developments and oil/water separators for industrial facilities. The draft ordinance is intended to prevent overpumping of ground water and reduce ground water contamination.

Grant Cuts Eliminate Bay Act Assistance to Towns

Due to \$1,100,000 in state budget cuts at the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department (CBLAD), the Fiscal Year 2003 Technical Assistance Grant Program for local governments has been drastically reduced. Accordingly, the A-NPDC will no longer be able to provide Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act assistance to Eastern Shore towns.

Since 1990, CBLAD grant funding enabled the A-NPDC to assist the 15 Eastern Shore towns in the Chesapeake Bay watershed with Bay Act compliance.

In 2002, the A-NPDC assisted the towns of Hallwood, Painter, Melfa, Cheriton and Exmore to meet the requirements of the Act.



Bayview Sewer Construction

Public Service Authority Continues Planning

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Public Service Authority (ESVPSA) continues planning to develop sewer service for priority areas in the region. An additional \$50,000 grant from the USDA Rural Business Service will pay for staff to address the commercial sewer needs of central Accomack County and northern Northampton County.

Improved treatment of sewage from septic tanks is also being studied. The feasibility of treatment by public sewage treatment plants is being assessed.

In addition, construction of water and sewer systems for the Bayview community started in order for the ESVPSA to assume management next year.

The ESVPSA also plans to manage sewer systems in the Savagetown and Cats Bridge communities, and other communities as needed.

Established in 1999 by Accomack and Northampton Counties, the ESVPSA is charged with addressing water and sewer needs of the region. The A-NPDC staffs the ESVPSA.



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Advisors
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Lance L. Metzler
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Russell O. Slayton, Jr., Esquire

Ground Water Committee Reviews Studies

During FY 2002, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Ground Water Committee heard presentations from the United States Geological Survey and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality on the Chesapeake Bay Impact Crater and the updating of Virginia's ground water flow models.

The Committee's consulting hydrogeologist also presented data on Eastern Shore ground water use and monitoring wells.

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Enterprise Zone Update

The Enterprise Zone program continues to provide rewards to growing businesses. Eighteen Eastern Shore of Virginia businesses received job grants, state income tax reductions, or real estate improvement credits in 2001. The businesses earn the rewards by creating new full-time jobs or by making real estate improvements.



Country Way Mercantile, Dave's Quality Service Center, FlamecrusherUSA, and Wine, Cheese & More

Alive and Well Downtown

Remember when downtown was “the” place to be? It could soon be that way again in the Towns of Exmore and Chincoteague. As a part of their revitalization efforts, the towns are offering low-interest loans to new businesses locating in their downtowns.

Exmore has made loans to 3 new businesses. Country Way Mercantile, owned by Barry and Mary Marsh, fits in with Exmore’s antiques and arts niche by carrying everything from stick candy to hand crafted items. Dave’s Quality Service Center has worked on over 1,750 vehicles since opening in January 2002. David Scanlan worked as a mechanic for 21 years before realizing his dream of starting his own business. Flamecrusher USA / Eastern

Shore Embroidery opened in July. New Zealand-born Grant Elwood began with a monogramming business and is gearing up to sell flame retardant suits to race car drivers.

Chincoteague now boasts a gourmet food and wine shop in its downtown. Owners Denise Bowden and Linda Cowger opened their doors in March thanks to the Town’s revolving loan fund. “We’ve had a great first year. Summer was busy and now we’re gearing up for the holidays with gift baskets and special orders.”

Chincoteague also acquired property in the downtown area that will be the site of future improvements. Exmore has relocated into its new Town Hall.

Regional Partnership Projects

The Eastern Shore Regional Partnership continues work on economic development projects.

The Business Development and Workforce Services Center at Eastern Shore Community College task force completed a preliminary engineering report. Passage of the Higher Education Bond Referendum ensured \$2.3 million for this project.

The Virginia Space Flight Academy filled 7 summer camps for total enrollment in 2002 of 191 campers. Enrollment was 75 in 2001 and 33 in 2000. The Academy is working toward financial self-sufficiency.

The Networked Future project continues to promote use of the Internet as a business tool, developed a Strategic

Plan for Technology and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Portal, and is participating in state initiatives to bring high speed Internet access to the Shore.

The Destination Resort project was shelved when the developer concluded it was too expensive to build a small hotel in Wachapreague. Plans to build a Seafood Market at the Eastern Shore Farmers Market have been put on hold for lack of state funding. High salinity levels at the Cape Charles wastewater treatment plant have stymied the Sustainable Water Reuse project.

The state’s budget crisis nearly eliminated funding for the Regional Competitiveness Program next fiscal year. All 19 Partnerships will have to pursue alternative funding strategies.

Wako USA Locates in the Cape Charles Sustainable Technology Park

In May of 2001, Wako USA Inc. announced the relocation of its Haemachem Division production facility from North Carolina to Cape Charles Sustainable Technology Park. The relocation will create five biotech jobs, with the potential for more, through an investment of \$500,000.

Wako USA is a wholly owned subsidiary of Wako Pure Chemical Industries, Ltd. of Japan. The new facility will perform research with Limulus Amoebocyte Lysate (LAL), which is produced from the blood of horseshoe crabs. LAL has the unique ability of detecting bacterial endotoxins, a technique approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for testing injectable drugs. The horseshoe crabs are not killed in the process and their return to the ocean makes this a truly sustainable application.

“Northampton County was chosen due to its close proximity to our source of horseshoe crabs, the resources avail-

able from Virginia Tech and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and the existing infrastructure at our facilities in Chesterfield County all coupled together with the excellent facilities available in Cape Charles and its Sustainable Technology Park,” said Wako Senior Vice President Kiyoshi Misu.

“Wako Chemicals USA is a wonderful addition to the Sustainable Technology Park,” said Rick Hubbard, Chair of the Industrial Development Authority. “Northampton County’s Board of Supervisors invested in this innovative eco-industrial park specifically to create a home for companies like Wako that will create jobs while making sustainable use of local resources.”

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the Eastern Shore of Virginia Economic Development Commission and Northampton County assisted Wako Chemicals USA with its decision.

Frank Kilmon Recognized for Years of Service

In 2002, Franklin W. Kilmon was recognized for sixteen years of dedicated service on the Eastern Shore of Virginia Economic Development Commission. Mr. Kilmon, the longtime Mayor of Melfa, joined the Commission in July of 1986.



Eastern Shore of Virginia Economic Development Commission

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Schedule of Revenues and Expenses

	A-NPDC	A-NHRC	A-NRHA	ESVEDC	ESVRP	ESVPSA
REVENUES:						
Local	\$ 263,880	\$ 18,467	\$ 66,253	\$103,000	\$3,040	\$20,000*
State	163,556	6,248	0	0	303,543	12,500
Federal	1,099,389	571,885	1,775,366	0	0	0
Other	112,339	47,469	20,512	1,248	6,438	40
TOTALS	\$1,639,164	\$644,069	\$1,862,131	\$104,248	\$313,021	\$32,540
EXPENSES:						
Personnel/Management	\$900,472	\$116,547	\$267,494	\$72,803	\$33,040	\$0
Contractual Services	469,498	21,391	11,216	14,643	272,543	19,211
Other Operating Expenses	181,032	181,581	41,164	14,407	0	1,728
Construction/Capital Expense	42,263	324,139	14,429	0	0	0
Rental Assistance	0	0	1,509,787	0	0	0
Reserve (Deficit)	45,899	411	18,041	2,395	7438	11,601
TOTALS	\$1,639,164	\$644,069	\$1,862,131	\$104,248	\$313,021	\$32,540

* Indicates Loan



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New Construction in Sunnyside Village

Sunnyside Village Phase II

Phase II of Sunnyside Village near Cheriton got underway with construction financing for seven units of handicapped accessible housing committed by Shore Bank, Inc. A contract with BECO Construction, Inc. was executed in June of 2002 and construction began. Contracts for water, sewer and site work were also executed.

Permanent financing for the project in the amount of \$450,000 was committed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

The units are being constructed to meet the Fair Housing Act Design Manual with regard to handicap accessibility and location of electrical outlets, switches, kitchen, and bathroom requirements. Each two-bedroom unit measures 24' x 32' with a 6' x 32' front porch and a 10' x 12' deck with a handicap ramp.

Construction will be completed by the winter of 2002. Tenants will be selected from the A-NRHA's Section 8 Rental Assistance Waiting List.

The 16 rental units in Sunnyside Village Phase I were completed in 1999. All units are owned by the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority.

Section 8 Rental Assistance

Fiscal Year 2002 was the first year that the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority (A-NRHA) assumed full administrative responsibility with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for all Section 8 Rental Assistance Programs on the Eastern Shore.

Under direct contract with HUD, A-NRHA administered the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the Main Stream Program. Major accomplishments for the year included the formation of a Resident Advisory Board, adoption of a One-Year and Five-Year Plan, development and adoption of a comprehensive Administrative Plan, and attainment of a 95% unit utilization rate at year end.

Housing Assistance Provided to Shore Families

Housing assistance was provided to 25 families in Accomack and Northampton Counties this year. Fourteen of the 25 families received first-time indoor plumbing. Nine houses were rehabilitated, 14 new replacement houses were built, and 2 families were relocated to standard houses. Eight families became first-time homeowners.

Northampton has joined Accomack in the Eastern Shore Contractor Development Project to explore several options for increasing the rate of housing production including finding ways to make the State and Federal programs more contractor friendly, creating a non-profit home improvement company, and developing training programs that will help create new contractors or help upgrade Class "C" contractors to Class "B" or "A".

New Road Community Update

The efforts to revitalize the New Road community are progressing with a firm commitment to achieve the desired end result – no persons living in housing without indoor plumbing. Turning off Rt. 13 and onto Westmore Road provides evidence of the progress.

At year end, 8 houses had been rehabilitated and 20 new houses had been constructed. First-time home ownership opportunities had been provided to 22 families with funding from the Indoor Plumbing/Rehabilitation Program and additional funding from the Virginia Eastern Shore Economic Empowerment and Housing Corporation. Street, water, and sewer improvements were completed. Plans were well underway to construct 16 units of rental housing. Efforts were continuing to create additional home ownership opportunities for renters.

Most will agree it has been a long journey but definitely one worthwhile with long lasting impacts on the lives of many New Road families.

Bayview Heritage Gardens

Bayview Heritage Gardens is under construction. The streets to the new subdivision were roughed-in and the storm water retention pond was partially completed. The building pads for 32 units of rental housing were located on the site with the anticipation of construction beginning.

Work has also begun on the water and sewer systems that will provide services to the new subdivision. So far, funding has been identified for the construction of 51 new housing units, a community center, and two shop-houses.



A new house from the Tangier Disaster Recovery Initiative

Community Development Projects

Significant improvements were made in many locations on the Eastern Shore through community development projects.

In Accomack County, construction has begun on six new houses on Tangier as part of a Disaster Recovery Initiative project. The Community of Locust Mount saw the rehabilitation or replacement of six houses, along with some demolition and removal of debris, and the widening and cleaning of ditches. Four houses were repaired or replaced in the Catsbridge/Savagetown area. Phase I of the Makemie Park sewer system was completed, and applications were taken for the housing improvements to be accomplished with the IP/R set-aside for that area.

In Northampton County, four houses were repaired or replaced in Fairview, while one new house was built in Bayview. Several dilapidated structures were demolished, and several areas of debris were cleared in both communities. The Build For the Future program started in Fairview with a class of 6 trainees building a new house on Fishers Court. Build for the Future provides practical on-the-job training in construction trades.



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Did You Know? Agencies Work to Develop Affordable Rental Housing

The Accomack-Northampton Housing and Redevelopment Corporation and the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority have addressed the critical need for affordable rental housing on the Eastern Shore for many years despite limited resources. The two agencies have successfully developed funding to rehabilitate and construct 77 units of agency-owned affordable rental housing in Onancock, Belle Haven, Exmore, and Cheriton. Section 8 rental assistance and Rural Development operating subsidies ensure access to the units by low-income families.



How to Contact the A-NPDC

If you have questions or comments about anything in this publication, please don't hesitate to contact the Planning District Commission.

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