



2019 - 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

*Photo Courtesy of Twin Cedar Images
Photo taken at MacCallum More
Museum & Gardens in Chase City, VA*

OUR MISSION

The primary objective of the Southside Planning District Commission is to promote the orderly and efficient development of the economic, physical and social fabric of this rural region by assisting local governmental units in developing policies, programs and projects which directly impact the region's economic, physical and social needs.



Kim Callis, Chairman



Deborah Gosney, Executive Director

SOUTHSIDE PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION



(Left to Right) **Lisa McGee** - Administrative Assistant, **Chad Neese** - GIS/Transportation Planner, **Ashleigh Zincone** - Senior Planner, **Deborah Gosney** - Executive Director, **Andy Wells** - GIS & Cartography Manager, **Stephanie Creedle** - Finance Director/HR, **Sangi Cooper** - Senior Planner

The Southside Planning District Commission's staff provides technical and economic development assistance to the local governments and citizens of the Southside Planning District in order to promote the orderly and efficient physical, social, and economic growth of the region. Members of the commission include the Counties of Brunswick, Halifax, and Mecklenburg, the Towns of South Boston and South Hill. The Commission's staff, working in conjunction with local officials, has developed a work program consisting of a wide range of planning activities directed towards identifying and resolving the economic and social deficiencies which seriously affect the District's future well-being and development.



50TH ANNIVERSARY ANNUAL MEETING

Chairman Kim Callis welcomed everyone to the 50th Annual Dinner Meeting of the Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC), held at The Dogwood in South Hill, Virginia on October 24, 2019. Dr. Larry Terry, Executive Director of the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia, was the guest speaker. Dr. Terry spoke on his belief in people and the importance of collaborating and working together in communities. Relationship building is the core to achieving success, and the Weldon Cooper Center is working hard to build relationships in Southside Virginia. He shared his mission statement which is, "I believe in people more than I believe in power."

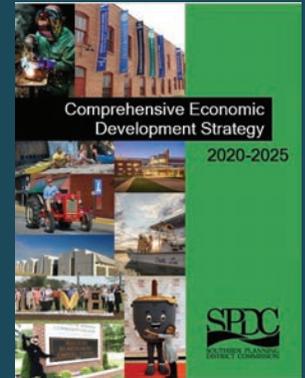
Executive Director Gosney recognized Senior Planner Sangi Cooper for ten years of service with the Commission by presenting her with an award and thanked her for her dedication and commitment to our communities.

Photos, right side starting at top: Dr. Terry receives a thank you gift basket for serving as the guest speaker.; Executive Director Deborah Gosney presents Senior Planner Sangi Cooper with a Ten-Year's of Service Award.; SPDC Retiree Linda Elms and Senior Planner Ashleigh Zincone.; Administrative Assistant Lisa McGee and Finance Director/HR Stephanie Creedle welcome guests to the 50th Annual SPDC Dinner.; Glanzy Spain, SPDC Commissioner, and wife Jean.



COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

As a designated Economic Development District (EDD) by the Department of Commerce - Economic Development Administration (EDA), one of Southside Planning District Commission's primary responsibilities is to prepare a CEDS for the region. The CEDS 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. The Southside PDC worked with the CEDS Committee and member governments in identifying project priorities - those most needed to fulfill the region's economic development initiatives. Public participation opportunities were made available throughout the process of creating the 2020 CEDS Update, which included a 30-day public comment period. The 2020 CEDS will be adopted October 15, 2020.



Lake Country Development Corporation (LCDC), a non-profit 501 (3)(c) organized in 1981, provides low-interest financing for local economic development needs through several revolving loan fund pools: 1) Economic Development Administration Revolving Loan Fund (requests up to \$400,000), 2) USDA Rural Development Intermediary Relending Program (requests up to \$150,000), and a 3) Microlending Pool (requests under \$40,000). LCDC has closed 67 total loans since its inception resulting in the retention of 98 jobs and the creation of 1,858 jobs. Over \$10 million in revolving loan funds has been leveraged with over \$11 million in local match or other public funding and over \$48 million in private funding or new equity resulting in a leveraging ratio of four (4) private dollars to one (1) federal dollar. LCDC currently has 15 active loans, 10 of which are COVID-19 emergency loans from LCDC's Microlending Pool.

REGIONAL PLANS

REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies, analyzes, and assesses overall risk to natural hazards while also including numerous mitigation actions on a regional and local level to help reduce or eliminate risks to life and property. SPDC staff worked closely with local government staff, elected officials, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the public throughout the planning process. The updated Plan was officially approved and deemed "current" by FEMA in September 2020. Financial assistance for the updating of the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan was made possible by FEMA and VDEM with the SPDC providing the local match.

2045 REGIONAL LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The 2045 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP) is a goal driven plan that evaluates the transportation network and includes recommendations to address current and future needs. While transportation modes such as roadways, rail, transit, airports and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are included in the Plan, the majority of the Plan focuses on roadways and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. As part of the recent review and update process, a prioritization matrix was utilized to identify those transportation projects that are better positioned to receive support and funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). The Plan is the result of a cooperative effort between VDOT, the SPDC, local governments throughout the region, and the public. Adoption of the 2045 RLRTP occurred at the SPDC's January 2020 Commission meeting.

PENDING PROJECT COORDINATION

Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

■ BRUNSWICK COUNTY CHESTNUT SCATTERED SITE HOUSING PROJECT

The County is requesting CDBG assistance to rehabilitate 13 low to moderate income homes.

■ LACROSSE PINE STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT-PHASE 2

Project funds will be used to rehabilitate 8 LMI homes, demolish one vacant structure, and provide infrastructure improvements.

USDA- Rural Development

■ CHASE CITY SEWER SYSTEM ENGINEERING REPORT

The Town has applied for a USDA-RD SEARCH grant to develop a Preliminary Engineering Report of the Town's existing sanitary sewer system to evaluate necessary improvements and to develop an Environmental Review for those areas of improvements.

Virginia Department of Transportation

■ LAWRENCEVILLE TOBACCO HERITAGE TRAIL CONNECTOR PROJECT

Funds are requested to create a new pedestrian access and extend the trail to directly connect to Heritage Trail Park.

■ SOUTH HILL DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PROJECT, PHASE 5

Funds are requested to relocate overhead utilities and to install curb and gutter, sidewalk entrances, and decorative streetlamps.

■ LAWRENCEVILLE SHARP STREET SIDEWALK PROJECT

Funds will be utilized to improve pedestrian safety, meet ADA compliance, and reconstruct sidewalks and storm water infrastructure.

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

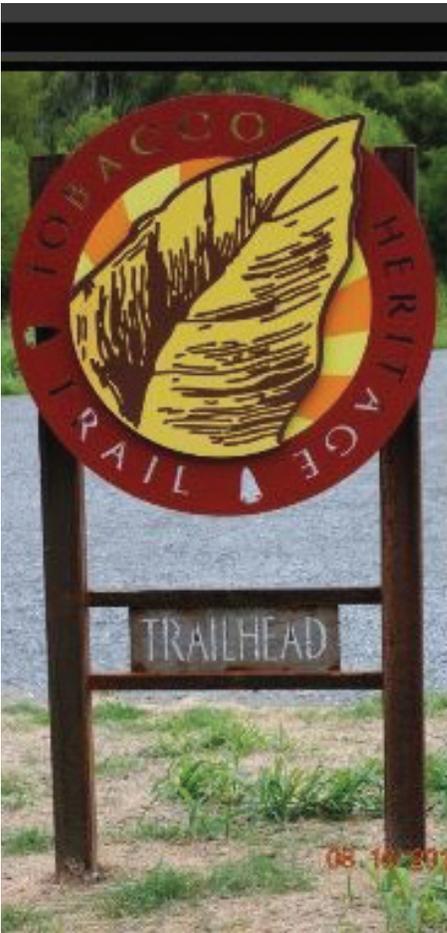
■ SOUTH BOSTON RIVERDALE ACQUISITION PROJECT

Project funds will be utilized to demolish 14 commercial structures, acquire nearby vacant parcels and dedicate the land to open space use as a result of extreme flooding.

Virginia Housing Development Authority

■ CHASE CITY LEE BUILDING MARKET STUDY

Funds will be used for a Market Study to focus on the demand for upper story housing and a Feasibility Study to determine best uses for the Lee Building.



PROJECT COORDINATION

Brunswick County

- **ALBERTA TOBACCO HERITAGE TRAIL PROJECT** – Construct 0.6 miles of trail in downtown Alberta.
- **BRODNAX DEPOT RENOVATION PROJECT** – Purchase and renovate the vacant train depot to serve as the Tobacco Heritage Trail Trailhead.
- **BRODNAX HIGHWAY 58/DORNIA AVENUE HOUSING PLANNING PROJECT** – Assess the housing needs, interest and eligibility for a potential housing rehab construction project.
- **BRODNAX WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT** – Improve the Town's water distribution systems.
- **BRUNSWICK COUNTY ALVIS ROAD HOUSING REHAB PROJECT** – Rehab 11 homes.
- **BRUNSWICK COUNTY CHESTNUT SCATTERED SITE HOUSING REHAB PLANNING PROJECT** – Assess the housing needs, interest, and eligibility for a potential housing rehab construction project.
- **BRUNSWICK COUNTY FLAT ROCK ROAD HOUSING PROJECT** – Rehab 23 LMI homes.
- **BRUNSWICK IDA SLEDGE AND BARKLEY REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT** – Provide architectural plans, historic preservation tax incentive program and marketing and materials.
- **LAWRENCEVILLE DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK PROJECT, PHASE 2** – Replace sidewalks.
- **LAWRENCEVILLE NORTH MAIN STREET SIDEWALK PROJECT** – Rebuild existing sidewalks.

Halifax County

- **HALIFAX COUNTY MEADVILLE ROAD HOUSING PROJECT** – Rehab 11 LMI homes and demolish 4 vacant structures.
- **HALIFAX COUNTY SUTPHIN/COWFORD ROAD SEWER PROJECT** – Make improvements to convey wastewater from the Town of Halifax to South Boston for treatment.
- **HALIFAX COUNTY TOBACCO HERITAGE TRAIL EXTENSION, PHASE I** – Construct trail starting at the Berry Hill Resort and end near Mirey Creek.
- **SOUTH BOSTON GREENE'S CROSSING BOAT LAUNCH PROJECT** – Construct a new boat/canoe/kayak launch on the Dan River.
- **SOUTH BOSTON JOHN RANDOLPH HOTEL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT** – Redevelopment of the historic John Randolph Hotel into a boutique hotel with a restaurant, rooftop bar, and gift shop.
- **SOUTH BOSTON NORTH MAIN STREET HOUSING PLANNING PROJECT** – Assess the housing needs, interest, and eligibility for a potential housing rehab construction project.

Mecklenburg County

- **CHASE CITY ENDLY STREET COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE 1** – Rehab 10 LMI homes and infrastructure improvements.
- **CHASE CITY ENDLY STREET COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE 2** – Rehab 13 LMI homes and infrastructure improvements.
- **CLARKSVILLE PLANTER’S TOBACCO WAREHOUSE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT** – Redevelop the former Planter’s Tobacco Warehouse into a multi-use facility with apartments and a restaurant.
- **CLARKSVILLE SOUTHWEST DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE 2** – Rehab 12 LMI homes and infrastructure improvements.
- **CLARKSVILLE WASTEWATER TREATMENT DISINFECTION EVALUATION REPORT** – Complete a Preliminary Engineering Report and Environmental Review on the disinfection processes at its Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- **LACROSSE PINE STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE I** – Rehab 9 LMI homes and infrastructure improvements.
- **LACROSSE PINE STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PLANNING PROJECT, PHASE 2** – Assess the housing needs, interest, and eligibility for a potential housing rehab construction project.
- **MECKLENBURG HIGHWAY 49 SKIPWITH HOUSING PROJECT** – Rehab 16 LMI homes and demolition of 4 vacant structures.
- **MECKLENBURG QUAIL HOLLOW HOUSING PROJECT** – Rehab 23 LMI homes.

Regional

- **SOUTHERN VIRGINIA FOOD HUB** – Assist artisan food businesses and small farmers to become sustainable via access to Value-Added Processing equipment.
- **THE CIVIL RIGHTS HERITAGE TRAIL PROJECT** – Add additional sites to the trail, complete graphics design of map and trail listings, refurbish the existing pedestals, make existing sites ADA compliant, install new wayfinders, and complete an Economic Impact Study.

GO VIRGINIA REGION 3

Growth and Opportunity Virginia (GO Virginia) is a business-led, Commonwealth-supported initiative formed in 2016 to generate private sector growth and job opportunities by encouraging strategic, job-focused collaboration among business, education, and local government. The SPDC serves as the Support Organization and Fiscal Agent for the GO Virginia Region 3 Council. During this fiscal year, GO Virginia awarded the following activities:

■ **GREAT OPPORTUNITIES IN TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING CAREERS (GO-TEC) PHASE 1 PROJECT** - This project is a multi-jurisdictional collaboration to expand existing curriculum offered by higher education partners, build a regional training system for careers in IT and Advanced Manufacturing, and develop a pipeline beginning in middle school to increase the number of students entering the targeted training areas.

■ **GREAT OPPORTUNITIES IN TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING CAREERS (GO-TEC) PHASE 2** - This project will consist of a build out of 14 middle school career connection labs, equipment, program materials and outreach. The goal is to attract new companies, create up to 600 new jobs with average salaries of \$61,250, and have potential for up to \$100 million in new investment in the Commonwealth.

■ **SOVA INNOVATION HUB PROJECT** - Grant funds will assist with site development and plans, programming review, and an economic impact assessment to facilitate and support the construction of a multi-use facility to house a new headquarters for Mid-Atlantic Broadband.

■ **ENTREPRENEURSHIP INNOVATION & INVESTMENT STRATEGY STUDY** - This project will develop a comprehensive strategy and framework for a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem for the region.

■ **OPERATION LAST MILE DRONE TESTING PROJECT** This is a pilot project to test the use of St. Paul's College in Lawrenceville as a potential drone testing facility and to test the use of drone delivery for medical supplies, tests and equipment.

■ **IALR COMMON PLATFORM PROJECT** - Grant funds will be used for common career development and exploration of an online platform for middle and high school students.

■ **BRIDGE TO RECOVERY** - Grant funds will support businesses through the multiple recovery periods of the COVID-19 pandemic, bridge supply chain needs, match business needs with service provider solutions, and assist in overall economic recovery.



SVHEC Career Tech Academy student (part of the GO TEC initiative).





ANDY WELLS
GIS & Cartography Manager

CHAD NEESE
GIS/Transportation Planner

GIS PLANNING & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE



The SPDC provides GIS (Geographic Information Systems) technical assistance to Brunswick, Halifax, and Mecklenburg Counties in slightly varying scope and capacity. All three counties receive 911 mapping updates, Next-Generation 911 administration services, and general GIS technical assistance through agreements with the localities. The SPDC provides web mapping platforms where needed by County staff and provides the public GIS mapping website for two of the three Counties. The SPDC also supports parcel mapping used by the Commissioners of the Revenue and this year, the SPDC agreed to produce GIS parcel mapping for Halifax County as an ongoing service. Specifically, the SPDC also provided GIS and mapping services to support the Tobacco Heritage Trail and other transportation projects, assisted with the US Census, and provided mapping for various local projects in the District.

COVID 19 PANDEMIC

On March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph Northam declared a State of Emergency due to the pandemic of a newly discovered virus known as the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19). As defined by the World Health Organization, “Most people infected with COVID-19 experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment; however, older people and those with underlying medical problems are more likely to develop serious illness.” Due to its highly contagious nature, face masks became highly recommended and in some places, required. At this time, there are no specific vaccines or treatments for COVID-19. The State of Emergency required children to stay home from school, required stringent restrictions for businesses that were detrimental to their survival and caused working from home to become the norm for many workers. As a result, initiatives were put in place to aid in recovery for businesses that suffered.



SPDC Current Response

- EDA CARES Act Grant funds were used to procure a COVID Disaster Recovery Coordinator to assist with the influx of funding opportunities and to develop, facilitate, and coordinate pandemic related projects. The CEDS will be updated to include a Region-specific Pandemic Response and Recovery Plan to mitigate financial damages in the event of future pandemics.
- Brunswick, Halifax, and Mecklenburg CDBG Small Business Recovery Grant Assistance Fund (SBRAF) Projects will support small businesses in their COVID-19 recovery efforts.
- GO VA Region 3 Bridge to Recovery Project provides support to businesses through the multiple recovery periods of the COVID-19 pandemic, bridges supply chain needs, and assists in overall economic recovery.
- SPDC assisted Mecklenburg County with the Tourism and Arts Recovery Fund launch which will assist local Non-Profit organizations in the Tourism of Arts industries in their recovery.
- The Mid Atlantic Broadband's Middle Mile Project will provide funds to prepare engineering design/specs and an environmental review to extend internet connectivity to rural communities to facilitate remote work and education.
- Mecklenburg and Brunswick's Food Insecurity Project seeks to provide homes, with school age children, a locally sourced "Farm Fresh Food Box", assisting both local farmers and families.



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Southsidepdc.org



COMMISSION MEMBERS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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Bernard Jones, Sr.*
Alfonzo Seward
Leslie Weddington, Treasurer*
John Zubrod*

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Stanley Brandon*
William Claiborne
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TOWN OF SOUTH HILL

Kim Callis, Chairman*
Lillie Feggins-Boone
Lisa Jordan

Counties of Brunswick, Halifax and Mecklenburg Town of South Boston – Town of South Hill

Towns of Alberta, Boydton, Brodnax, Chase City, Clarksville, Halifax,
LaCrosse, Lawrenceville, Scottsburg, & Virgilina

* Executive Board



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Photo taken at MacCallum More
Museum & Gardens in Chase City, VA