

SOUTHSIDE PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
In-Person Quarterly Meeting
April 23, 2026

The Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC) held its regular quarterly meeting on April 23, 2026, at the Commission's Conference Room, 200 South Mecklenburg Avenue, South Hill, Virginia. Lunch was held at 12:09 p.m., and Chair Tom Tanner called the meeting to order at 12:20 p.m. Director Wells called the roll. With a total of 12 Commissioners being present in person, a quorum was met for this meeting. The Roll Call is as follows:

Brunswick County	Present	Virtual	Absent
Dr. Alfonzo Seward			X
Leslie Weddington – Treasurer	X		
Dr. Barbara Jarrett-Harris	X		
Halifax County			
Larry Roller	X		
William Claiborne	X		
Jerry Lovelace	X		
Keith McDowell	X		
Ron Brade	X		
Mecklenburg County			
Joe Cappaert	X		
Charlie Simmons			X
Claudia Lundy	X		
Tom Tanner – Chair	X		
Kirk Gravitt		X	
South Boston			
Joseph Chandler	X		
George Leonard – Vice Chair	X		
South Hill			
Keli Reekes			X
Lillie Feggins-Boone			X
TOTAL	12	1	4

Staff	Present	Virtual	Absent
Andy Wells, Executive Director	X		
Leslie Kubasek, Finance Director/HR	X		
Ashleigh Zincone, Senior Community Planner	X		
Sangi Cooper, Senior Planner	X		
Chad Neese, Senior Planner/GIS Specialist	X		
Tyler Creedle, GIS Coordinator	X		
Donna Wall, Community Project Manager	X		
Tanya Jessup, Administrative Assistant	X		

GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. E. Jay Ellington, Executive Director, Crater Planning District Commission

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chair Tanner asked for public comments. Hearing none, the public comment period was closed.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda including the Meeting Agenda, Meeting Minutes dated January 22, 2026, and the Treasurer's Report dated March 31, 2026, were submitted in the meeting packet emailed prior to the meeting. **Joseph Chandler made a motion to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Jerry Lovelace, the motion carried unanimously.**

REVOLVING LOAN FUND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Executive Director Wells reported that the dissolution of the Lake Country Development Corporation (LCDC) is nearly complete and that the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) will be administered by the Commission moving forward. The Executive Committee met earlier in the month to review the process for loan application and approval. It was decided to keep the process largely the same, utilizing a three-person advisory committee. Senior Planner Sangi Cooper will manage the application process, with recommendations presented to the Executive Committee for approval. The Executive Committee was selected to review applications in part because it more frequently enters closed session, which will allow for appropriate handling of confidential or sensitive information related to private businesses. Upon approval by the Commission, the Chair will appoint the three members to serve on the advisory committee. **George Leonard made a motion to move forward with forming the advisory committee and authorizing the Chair to appoint its members, seconded by Keith McDowell, the motion carried unanimously.**

FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET

Executive Director Wells presented the FY27 budget, reviewing both revenues and expenses. Using a PowerPoint presentation, he briefly compared the FY25, FY26, and FY27 budgets.

He provided an overview of the Commission's revenue streams and noted that expenses remain relatively consistent and are easy to track. Mr. Wells explained that revenue can be less predictable, as it is largely tied to grant-funded projects. He reviewed the various components of revenue and revenue by project type. **Joseph Chandler made a motion to approve the FY27 budget, seconded by Leslie Weddington, the motion carried unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Wells reported on the following:

- **Professional Engagements** – Executive Director Wells attended the National Association of Development Organizations conference in March in Washington, DC, participated in meetings coordinated by Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions to discuss funding for Planning District Commissions, and noted that he will be attending the SERDI Annual Professional Development Conference and New Executive Directors Training later this month.
- **Program Activity** – The Commission is currently administering over 80 active projects, programs, and initiatives. Executive Director Wells reported that all three Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications submitted by the Commission were approved, totaling approximately \$3.7 million, supporting three projects.
- **Organizational Updates** – Executive Director Wells acknowledged the appointment of Jerry Lovelace as Vice Chair and referenced the formation of the Revolving Loan Fund Advisory Committee.
- **Staff Recognition** – Executive Director Wells recognized the hard work and dedication of staff.

REGIONAL & TRANSPORTATION PLANNING OVERVIEW

Chad Neese, Senior Planner/GIS Specialist, provided an update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), noting that it was updated and revised in 2025 and is now fully digital. He also reviewed the Regional Water Supply Plan, which will update and consolidate the Halifax County plan with those of Brunswick County and Mecklenburg County. The plan includes information on water sources, current and projected demand, water management activities, and supply risks and mitigation strategies, and is due October 9, 2029. Mr. Neese also reviewed funding sources and amounts. Mr. Neese provided an update on the Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, noting that the update is currently underway with anticipated completion in 2026.

FISCAL YEAR 2027 VDOT RURAL WORK PROGRAM

Chad Neese, Senior Planner/GIS Specialist, presented the Fiscal Year 2027 VDOT Rural Transportation Planning Work Program. He explained that the program is developed in coordination with Virginia Department of Transportation and localities to establish planning tasks and priorities, with required activities guided by both VDOT and the U.S. Department of Transportation, while also incorporating activities of local interest.

Mr. Neese noted that the purpose of the program is to provide annual transportation planning assistance to non-urbanized areas of the Commonwealth and reviewed associated funding and administrative responsibilities.

He also highlighted key program activities and funding opportunities, including Smart Scale Round 9 applications and Growth and Accessibility Planning applications anticipated in fall 2026, both of which provide full project funding. He further noted additional funding programs, including Revenue Sharing, Transportation Alternatives, State of Good Repair, and Ready Set Go. Mr. Neese reviewed ongoing and planned initiatives, including regional bicycle, pedestrian, and trails planning; the 2050 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan; Downtown Parking Studies; and Urban Development Area (UDA) planning assistance, all of which support transportation system evaluation, connectivity, and community development. He also noted continued technical assistance efforts, including support to localities, coordination with VDOT, and assistance related to the Tobacco Heritage Trail.

Joseph Chandler made a motion to adopt the FY27 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program, seconded by Claudia Lundy, the motion carried unanimously.

GUEST SPEAKER – REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Mr. E. Jay Ellington, Executive Director of the Crater Planning District Commission presented on the proposed South Central Transportation Authority (SCTA), a regional transportation framework for Southside Virginia. Using a PowerPoint presentation, he provided an overview of existing transportation authorities across Virginia, including Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Central Virginia.

Mr. Ellington reviewed the proposed SCTA boundaries, describing a multi-jurisdictional region anchored by the Crater Planning District Commission and extending into Southside Virginia. He noted the Authority would span key corridors including I-85, I-95, and Route 460, strengthening connections to Richmond, Northern Virginia, and Hampton Roads. Commissioner Ron Brade, Halifax County Administrator, expressed interest in the potential inclusion of Halifax County and South Boston, without committing at this time. Mr. Ellington noted that the proposed boundaries align with existing Planning District Commission regions and reflect shared infrastructure needs and regional economic interdependence.

Mr. Ellington highlighted key considerations, including the need for dedicated and stable funding through regional revenue sources, noting that the Authority would be funded through tax revenues. He explained that this structure would support improved regional coordination, enhance competitiveness for state and federal funding, and advance economic development through a multimodal transportation system. He further noted that governance would preserve local control, with representation from each member locality, while acknowledging the importance of clearly communicating the benefits to the public given anticipated public and legislative review.

Mr. Ellington also reviewed anticipated community benefits, including improved quality of life, enhanced economic opportunity, and improved regional connectivity.

Mr. Ellington outlined a proposed timeline for formation, including regional consensus and local resolutions in 2026, followed by legislative action during the 2027 General Assembly Session, with a potential effective date of July 1, 2027.

Keith McDowell made a motion to include Halifax County and South Boston in the initial boundaries and planning process for consideration as part of the proposed South Central Transportation Authority, seconded by Joseph Chandler, the motion carried unanimously.

VIRGINIA ROANOKE RIVER BASIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Executive Director Wells provided an overview of the Virginia Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee, noting that it was established under Virginia Code § 62.1-69.34. The Committee is composed of 23 members, including Virginia legislators, citizen members, representatives from Planning District Commissions, a member of Congress (or designee), and representatives from North Carolina. The Committee focuses on water supply and allocation, water quality issues, interstate coordination with North Carolina, and advising policymakers on basin-related concerns. Staff support and funding are provided through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Executive Director Wells noted that the Commission has previously had representation on the Committee, including the reappointment of Jerry Lovelace and the appointment of Dan Tanner, as reflected in April 2018 SPDC minutes. Mr. Lovelace was also appointed by the Governor to the Bi-State Commission.

Discussion followed regarding the status of the Advisory Committee and the Bi-State Commission. It was noted that while North Carolina has made recent appointments to the Bi-State Commission, recent reports indicate little to no activity for either group since prior to December 2021, and that the DEQ has reported no meetings for the Advisory Committee in recent years. The 2025 Bi-State Commission report continues to list Mr. Lovelace as a member.

Jerry Lovelace discussed the importance of the Advisory Committee, noting that it is established by law and should be active. He emphasized the need to reestablish the Committee, stating that water resources are critical to the region and should remain a priority.

Jerry Lovelace made a motion to send a letter supporting the reestablishment of the Virginia Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee, seconded by Joe Cappaert, the motion carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business.

NEXT MEETING & ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:31 p.m.



Tom Tanner, PDC Chair



Andy Wells, PDC Secretary