



HAMPTON ROADS REVIEW

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE HAMPTON ROADS PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

SPRING 2001

Incident Management System Makes Local Roadways Safer

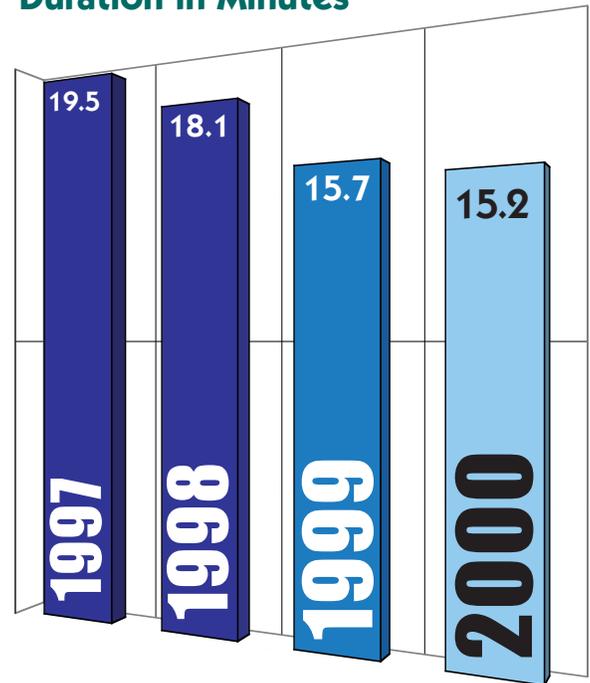
We all get frustrated when we have to sit in traffic—and more often than not, it is because of some incident occurring along the roadway. Sixty percent of all freeway traffic congestion in the United States results from traffic incidents caused by disabled vehicles, accidents, road maintenance, debris on the roadway, adverse weather conditions, and special events. This figure will increase to 70% by 2005. Incident Management is helping to decrease the impacts of traffic incidents across the nation.

Incident-related traffic congestion affects public safety, the local economy and the environment. Incidents can cause not only delays and lost productivity, but also secondary accidents, increased fuel consumption and an increase in air pollution from slow-moving traffic. In 2000, there were almost 36,000 disabled vehicles along our region's interstates, 3,200 accidents, and 1,400 instances of debris interrupting traffic flow. Not surprisingly, traffic incidents occurred most frequently between 7 and 8 a.m. and between 4 and 6 p.m. and most often on Fridays.

The Hampton Roads Incident Management Program, operated by VDOT, uses a variety of methods to reduce the frequency of incidents and secondary accidents, improve response and clearance times, reduce delay and congestion, increase accident survival rates, and improve air quality. Today, the program includes a system of cameras, radios, message signs, highway patrol, and a Freeway Incident Response Team (FIRT).

By responding and clearing accidents, disabled vehicles, and debris more quickly, there is less delay and fewer chances of secondary accidents, as well as better traffic flow that reduces vehicle emissions. The average duration of incidents has decreased from 19.5 minutes in 1997 to 15.2 minutes in 2000 on the freeway sections covered by the Incident Management Program.

**Average Traffic Incident
Duration in Minutes**



More inside on Incident Management...

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Hampton Roads Ranks High in Incident Management Coverage

Incident Management is helping to decrease the impacts of traffic incidents across the nation. The Hampton Roads Incident Management Program focuses on reducing the duration of incidents through better, more efficient response and clearance.

The region is making great progress and the program is growing in coverage and technology. In 2000, the Freeway Incident Response Team (FIRT) responded to almost 49,000 incidents. Plans are in place to cover more roadways in the future, including interstates and expressways in the 2021 Regional Transportation Plan and arterial roads throughout the region. Coverage will increase to 119 miles by 2003, with 288 cameras and 2,700 detectors, and to at least 300 miles by 2021.



Incident Management Technology Helps Air Quality

Hampton Roads has become the first region in the nation to capitalize on long-term air quality benefits by using incident management technology.

For the past several months, regional leaders faced the task of ensuring that Hampton Roads passed rigorous federal air quality standards. Failure to pass air quality analysis could mean a loss of hundreds of millions in transportation dollars in Hampton Roads. Agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency grant air quality "credits" to metropolitan regions for various programs designed to fight congestion. The Smart Travel Hampton Roads program, a long-term regional effort to reduce congestion through technology, provided valuable credits toward passing the air quality analysis.

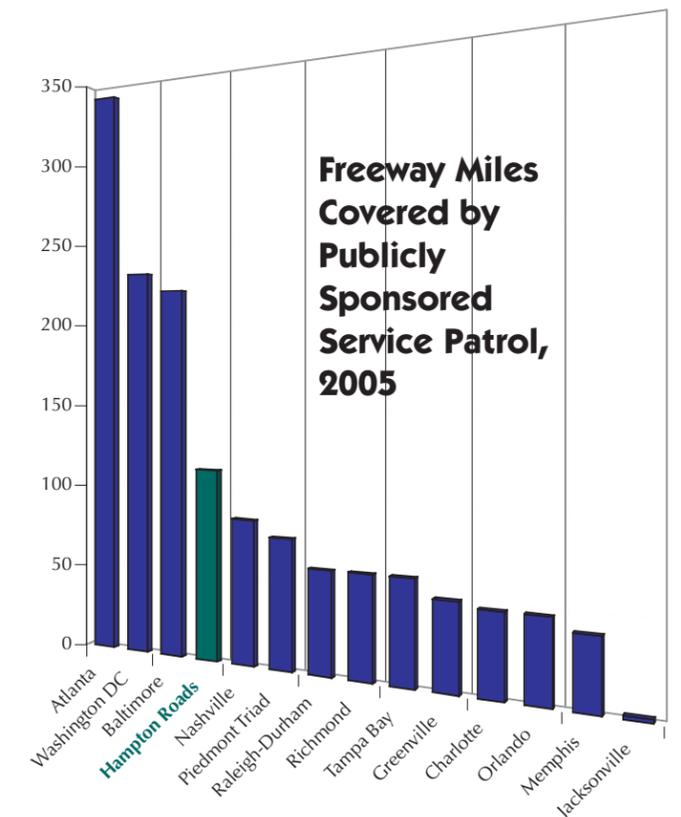
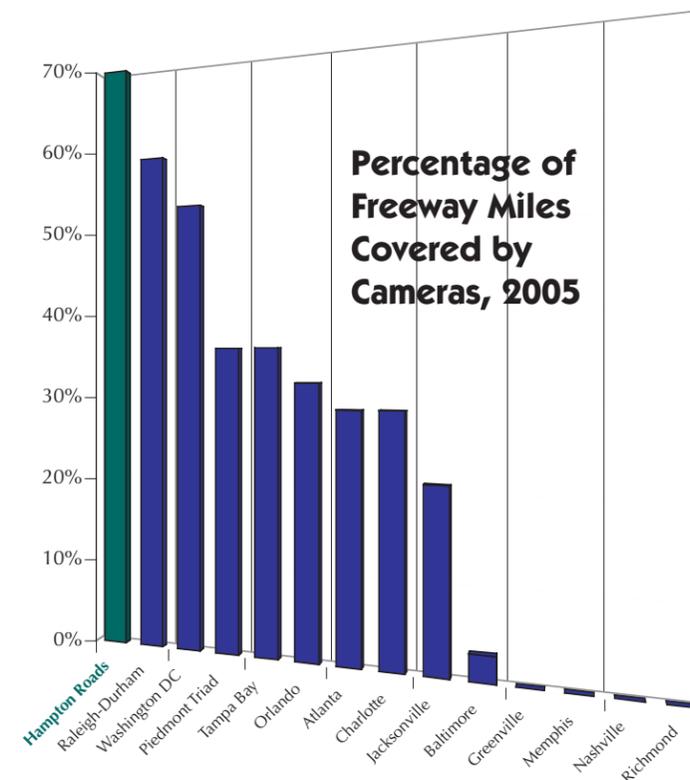
The Federal Highway Administration recently approved the region's long-range transportation plan. The approval was due in part to regional leaders successfully demonstrating how Smart Travel's traffic incident management program benefits local air quality by reducing congestion. No other metropolitan area in the nation has used these types of intelligent transportation system credits to pass the air quality conformity analysis.

The Smart Travel program is a prime example of Hampton Roads localities working toward solving congestion problems through an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS). All the cities and counties in Hampton Roads have committed to using all means possible, including technology, to benefit Hampton Roads motorists and reduce traffic problems.



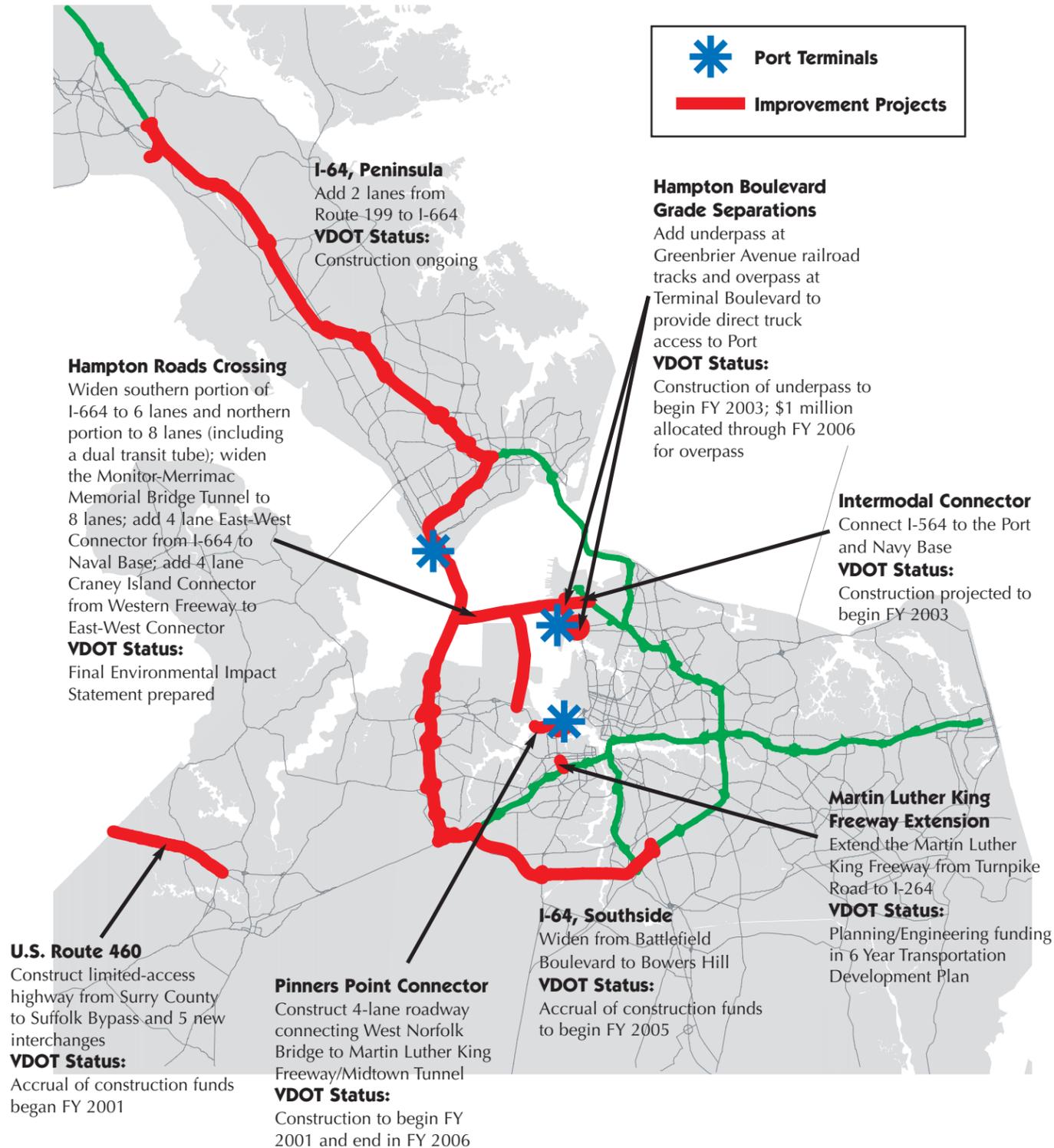
Freeway Service Patrol	Miles Patrolled per Day	Number of Vehicles	Incident Response per Day	Average Response Time (min.)
Hampton Roads	5063	23	133	5
San Diego	3675	21	140	5
San Francisco	8640	48	273	9.7
Houston	3150	9	113	8.5
Atlanta	9300	34	125	8
Detroit	800	6	28	NA
San Antonio	1650	3	35	15
Seattle	80	4	133	8

Hampton Roads ranks high among other large metropolitan areas in the miles patrolled per day. By 2005, the region will be one of the top areas in the southeast in the percentage of freeway miles covered by cameras and a publicly sponsored service patrol.



Port-related Projects in Long-Range Transportation Plan

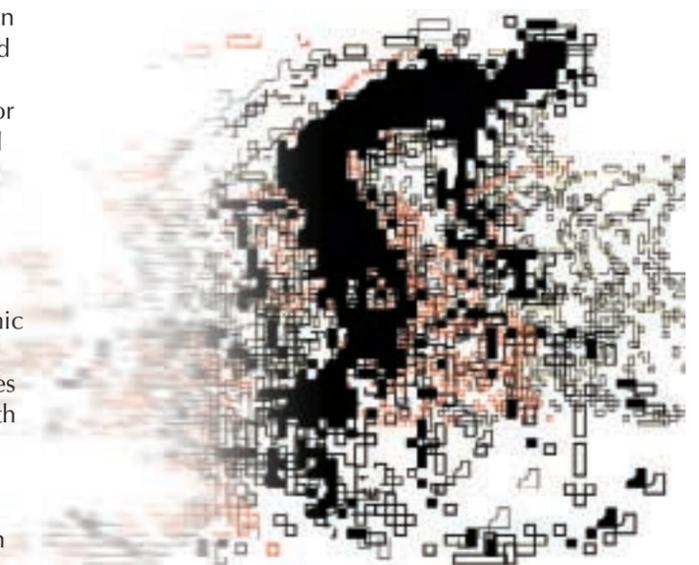
Our transportation system's ability to move goods efficiently is essential to the Port of Hampton Roads, which is the largest exporter and fourth largest importer among Atlantic Coast ports in the United States. The 2021 Regional Transportation Plan includes a number of projects that will help improve the movement of goods to and from the Port.



Bike and Sidewalk Inventory Provides New Tool for Planning

As part of the development of the 2021 Regional Transportation Plan, the HRPDC has gathered information from every city and county in the region on existing bike facilities and future bikeway plans. Sidewalk data has also been collected for major roadways in the region. As a result, the HRPDC has produced the first regional GIS map and inventory of bike facilities, sidewalks and planned bicycle improvements for Hampton Roads.

The inventory is a valuable new tool for local governments to use in future planning. Combining this data with socioeconomic and highway data within a GIS environment will greatly enhance the ability to incorporate bicycle and pedestrian issues into future transportation analysis. The data will be shared with the VDOT Hampton Roads District Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee. The committee, with representatives from bike clubs and each locality, intends to expand upon the HRPDC data and develop a bicycle plan for the entire VDOT Hampton Roads District.



National Emergency Training Center Conducting Local Workshop



The HRPDC, at the request of the Regional Debris & Infrastructure Management Planning Task Force, is coordinating and hosting a specialized training course on planning for and response to emergencies involving weapons of mass destruction/terrorism. The National Emergency Response and Rescue Training Center (NERRTC) at Texas A&M University will conduct this 3-day course at the HRPDC's Regional Boardroom on June 22, 25 and 26 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This free-of-charge, interactive course is open to public works officials and staff responsible for emergency response and recovery planning in their local governments. For information on registration, contact Gary Schuchardt, at HRPDC (757) 420-8300 or e-mail gschucha@hrpdc.org.

**Visit the HRPDC website
to get the facts about Hampton Roads.**

Latest Studies **www.hrpdc.org**

Population Information Community Data

Regional Statistics

Water-Sensitive Site Design & Development Workshop

WHEN: Thursday, May 3, 2001, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
WHERE: HRPDC Regional Board Room
COST: \$15 per person
AGENDA: The Chesapeake Bay: Alternative Futures Role of Low Impact Development in Meeting Virginia's Stormwater Management Regulations
Achieving Water-Sensitive Development through Virginia's Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act Principles & Applications Overcoming Impediments to Water Sensitive Site Design & Project Development
The afternoon program will feature concurrent case studies on application of LID Tools & Techniques: Greenfields and Urban Retrofits

SPONSORED BY: Virginia Tech Community Design Assistance Center, College of Architecture & Urban Studies and School of Public & International Affairs, in cooperation with DCR, CBLAD, Virginia Chesapeake Bay Scientific & Technical Advisory Committee, and the HRPDC

Deadline for registration is April 27.
To register, or for more information, contact:

Lisa Blankenship, Virginia Tech
217 Hutcheson Hall - 0401,
Blacksburg, VA 24061
Phone: 540-231-6921 Fax: 540-231-2421

Roundtable Focuses on Effects of Lower James River on Local Waterways

The HRPDC recently hosted a workshop to kick-off the Lower James River Roundtable. The purpose of the Roundtable is to advise the Commonwealth on implementation of the James River Tributary Strategy in Hampton Roads. The James River Tributary Strategy establishes goals for reducing the amount of nutrients and sediments entering waterways in Hampton Roads. By reducing these pollutants, scientists believe that resulting improvements in water quality will support greater levels of fish, oysters and other aquatic resources in Hampton Roads and the Chesapeake Bay.

The workshop represented an important step toward reducing pollutants in our region's waterways. Participants included David G. Brickley, Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation; Sheila S. Noll, HRPDC Chairman and Member of the York County Board of Supervisors; Bob Mandigo, HRPDC Commissioner and Virginia Beach Council Member; state agency staff; staff from the region's Soil and Water Conservation Districts; local governments; and citizens.

Representatives of the Virginia Departments of Environmental Quality and Conservation and Recreation, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the HRPDC, Hampton Roads Sanitation District, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts presented information about ongoing Tributary Strategy and Chesapeake Bay Program efforts. Focus group discussions helped to identify specific needs for scientific studies, coordination, funding, and education required for achieving state nutrient and sediment reduction goals in Hampton Roads.

Through a contract with the Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District, funded by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the HRPDC is responsible for facilitating the Lower James River Roundtable. Subsequent meetings of the Lower James River Roundtable will be held on a quarterly basis. Any questions or interest in participation should be addressed to John Carlock or Hugo Valverde at HRPDC, (757) 420-8300.

Students Awarded for Water Research

The HRPDC Directors of Utilities Committee presented the Hampton Roads Water Utilities Award again this year at the 50th Annual Tidewater Science Fair on March 17, 2001. The award promotes research focused on the value, protection, and management of water resources. Brian Ramaley, Director of Newport News Waterworks, judged and presented the awards and Scott Emry, HRPDC staff, assisted. The first place award recipients received a \$100.00 savings bond and the second place award recipients each received a \$50.00 savings bond.

Senior Division

1st Place
Leslie Scanlon, Maury High School, Norfolk
Project: The Effect of Surface Density by Azolla on the Amount of Dissolved Oxygen in the Water

2nd Place
Aneesh Venkat, York High School, York County
Project: Could Life Exist on Jupiter's Moon, Europa

Junior Division

1st Place
Niket Pandey, Eaton Middle School, Hampton
Project: Monthly, Seasonal, and Annual Linear Trends of Global Warming

2nd Place
Morgan Anderson, John Yeates Middle School, Suffolk
Project: How to Drink Salty Water

Local Planning Protects Chesapeake Bay and Water Quality

"Saving the Bay" is an ongoing and critical challenge that has not lost momentum in Hampton Roads. Much has been done to improve and protect the Chesapeake Bay, and still more efforts are being made by local governments and the HRPDC.

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (Bay Act) requires local governments to include water quality protection measures in their comprehensive plans. Localities must address five areas in their plans: physical constraints to development, protection of potable water supply, shoreline erosion control, public and private water access and redevelopment. The Bay Act also requires localities to create an information base for making policy choices about future land use and development that will protect the quality of Virginia's waters.

The HRPDC has been assisting local governments in developing amendments to their comprehensive plans to comply with the mandates of the Bay Act. Comprehensive Plan amendments have been prepared for Surry County, James City County and Virginia Beach. The HRPDC is currently performing technical studies for Chesapeake and Norfolk.

In providing comprehensive plan assistance, the HRPDC draws on a broad range of natural resource and planning studies and performs additional research to ensure accuracy and timeliness of information. The latest amendments, developed by the HRPDC for the James City County Comprehensive Plan, address both shoreline and ground water conditions. The most recent additions to the Virginia Beach Comprehensive Plan focus on ground water conditions, including ground water characterization and potential threats to ground water quality. Amendments to both plans provide policy recommendations to meet Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board (CBLAB) requirements. The HRPDC has included extensive GIS mapping to support and illustrate these recommendations. CBLAB has found both the Surry and Virginia Beach Plans to be consistent with Bay Act mandates.

The HRPDC's large information base and experience in regulatory compliance has enabled HRPDC staff to offer efficient, credible support to the local governments. The development of these comprehensive plans also has allowed the HRPDC to share the resulting information and experience with other localities. The ultimate goal is a healthy future for our region and the Chesapeake Bay.

Region Shows Signs of Economic Stress

The U.S. economy is expected to grow by just 2.6% in 2001 – half the rate of last year. Our economy in Hampton Roads has also experienced a slowdown. In 2000, civilian employment declined from a growth rate of 4% in January to less than a 2% growth rate in October. However, in spite of this slowdown, the region still outperformed the U.S. in civilian job growth. Last year, Hampton Roads hovered near a

3% unemployment rate for the year and dropped to 2.4% in December. The U. S. rate was 3.8% for that same month.

In spite of the good news on our labor market, consumers in the region show signs of economic stress. Retail sales figures dropped in much of 2000, with an extreme drop in December. Auto vehicle sales have begun to decline sharply and also took a deep fall in December. New home sales have declined in spite of fairly attractive mortgage rates. With consumers spending more than they have been making, the number of bankruptcies has begun to increase.

On the positive side, defense spending has begun to rise and defense contractors in our region should do well in

Hampton Roads Economic Forecast

	2000	2001 Forecast
Gross Regional Product	3.8%	1.9%
Civilian Employment	1.2%	0.6%
Unemployment Rate	3.0%	3.3%
Retail Sales	5.0%	2.1%
Hotel Receipts	5.1%	2.5%
New Home Sales	-7.5%	2.0%
Motor Vehicle Sales	10.2%	-5.0%

2001. The Newport News Shipyard is expecting to add 1,200 workers this year and sign a carrier contract. Military personnel will receive both an increase in base pay and a significant increase in their housing allowance this year, which can help to boost local spending.

If the stock market continues to decline, our local economy is not likely to be as adversely impacted as many areas of the U.S. With our youthful population and our lower incomes, investment income in

Hampton Roads is about 20% below the national average. The region's investment income is approximately \$1,000 less per capita than for the nation as a whole. Therefore, the regional economy is not heavily dependent upon the performance of the stock market.

So what's in store for our economy in 2001? There will be a slightly higher unemployment rate and slower growth in jobs and consumption. Auto sales are expected to decline, due to a strong surge of sales in 2000 reducing this year's demand for new vehicles. Overall, projections indicate a slower economic growth in 2001, with the Gross Regional Product growing at 1.9%.

HRPDC Helps Legislators Learn More About GIS Planning

The HRPDC participated in Virginia GIS Day on February 7th in Richmond to provide an opportunity for State Legislators to learn more about the capabilities of GIS in planning applications. Sponsored by the Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN), the all-day event featured presentations on a variety of GIS applications, including crime, forestry, real estate/property assessment, emergency evacuation, and transportation.

HRPDC GIS Planners conducted interactive presentations regarding transportation and land use planning. A GIS database on travel time for a particular city demonstrated current congestion, levels of service, and projected areas of future congestion. HRPDC also presented a development suitability analysis for an area on the border of Virginia Beach and Chesapeake, factoring in existing development, land cover, distance from agricultural land, and avoidance of wetland areas. The presentations provided members of the General Assembly and staff with an overview of the value and use of the Geographic Information System in transportation and land-use planning.

Technology Aiding Economic Development

The HRPDC is drawing on the power of technology to assist our local governments and regional agencies in economic development activities. The Economics Department now has modeling programs that provide valuable evaluations and insights into many aspects of economic development in Hampton Roads.

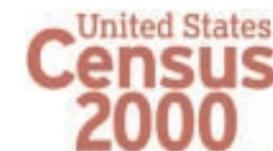
IMPLAN, which is an input/output modeling system, looks at the production side of the Hampton Roads economy. Input/output models have been created for every city and county in Hampton Roads. The model is used to evaluate various economic development projects and proposals reported by the region's two Economic Development Alliances. Eighty impact evaluations have been done using these models. For example, Suffolk wanted to determine the economic impact of a downtown conference and convention hotel. James City County wanted to look at different development scenarios for the County's industrial park and their potential impact. York County requested an assessment of the economic impact of a new waterfront plan. HRPDC also provided parameters from IMPLAN to the City of Hampton for the development of the City's financial model.

Most recently, the HRPDC acquired the REMI Model, which does policy, program, and project analyses. This model is the nation's most sophisticated regional model for analyzing local

economies and the impact of various public policies. It has been used all over the country by leading consultants, the federal government, state governments, and universities. HRPDC has used the program to develop models for the Peninsula and the Southside, allowing each area's economies and policies to be evaluated and compared. A comprehensive model that covers all of Hampton Roads has also been developed. That model is being used currently to analyze possible changes in activity at the Oceana Naval Air Station.

The Economics staff also has constructed a model addressing labor costs in Hampton Roads. For example, if a company is considering relocating to Hampton Roads, the occupations and number of people who will be employed by the company are entered into the model. The model determines the labor cost for the company in Hampton Roads, along with its estimated pool of labor. The estimated labor cost can also be compared to selected metropolitan areas around the country.

The Occupational Model, IMPLAN, and REMI offer a wide variety of applications for economic development officials in our region. The HRPDC is encouraging our local governments and regional agencies to use these constructive modeling programs in the promotion of economic expansion in Hampton Roads.



New Data Available

The Census Bureau has released its first round of Census 2000 information. Population counts for states, cities, counties and smaller areas by race and Hispanic origin are now available. Population counts are also available for 18 years and older by race and Hispanic origin.

For more census assistance, contact Kelli Peterson at 420-8300 or peterson@hrpdc.org

Did you know...

Virginia ranks 49th out of all 50 states in education spending per \$1,000 of income.

The Virginia state government has provided 1.76% of the state's personal income to support schools. The national average is 2.33% (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996-97).

The Virginia General Assembly allocated \$75 million to the construction of the Third Crossing in Hampton Roads. The project's total cost is estimated, with inflation, at \$4.4 billion.

Local governments in Virginia pay over \$400 million in operational costs for mandated services provided through public health departments, social service/welfare departments, Community Services Boards, and the Comprehensive Services Act, as well as the maintenance of jails.

According to Census 2000, the population of Virginia has increased 14.4% in the last ten years. Hampton Roads has seen an 8.1% increase - an additional 115,283 people.

Regional Effort Helps Support People in Need

Emergency situations - disability, unemployment or a sudden death in the family - can leave people unable to pay critical utility bills. A regional program now helps such people in need. The Help to Others (H2O) Program solicits community contributions for paying household water and sanitary sewer utility bills for individuals and families experiencing a temporary financial crisis. Established in July 1999, the program is a unique multi-agency partnership that crosses political boundaries to assist citizens in need.

The H2O Program exemplifies regional cooperation. Fifteen local jurisdictions have worked together to build a program that benefits citizens across jurisdictional borders. In each locality, the utility works in partnership with a local social services provider to identify, screen, and process applicants. Program administrative and fundraising costs are absorbed by the utilities, the Hampton Roads Sanitation District and the HRPDC. The success of the H2O Program also shows the regional unity of the citizens in Hampton Roads. Individuals and families from throughout the region have stepped forward with generous donations to help their neighbors overcome a personal or family crisis, regardless of geographic location.

Donations are solicited from utility customers through semi-annual fundraising campaigns. The first two campaigns raised a total of over \$49,000, with minimal promotion. In 2000, more than 155 families in Hampton Roads have received H2O assistance and have been able to retain their water and wastewater services. The program is still young and is expected to continue to grow.



HRPDC Initiatives

Every year the HRPDC Executive Committee and Chief Administrative Officers meet in a "Retreat" setting to review the Commission's focus and activities, and to determine needed initiatives on regional issues. Housing and human services, tax reform and transportation have been identified as critical issues concerning the quality of life and economic health of Hampton Roads.

Transportation

The Virginia General Assembly has not adequately addressed this region's long-term transportation funding problems. Rather than a "do nothing" approach, an alternative transportation strategy will be developed by the HRPDC over the next three years as a "fall back" position if funding is not provided by the General Assembly for the seven major transportation projects. This "fall back" position would include land use, growth management, and other "Smart Growth" concepts to try to alleviate the transportation problems resulting from the funding shortfall.

Tax Reform

Virginia's current tax structure is causing significant fiscal stress on local governments. The General Assembly has referred results of the Moss Commission, the Tax Reform Commission and other tax restructuring issues to another subcommittee for review, meaning another two years with little action being taken. The HRPDC will continue to provide research and reform initiatives to be embraced by the Mayors and Chairs Caucus, as well as the Hampton Roads Partnership, in their pursuit of much-needed tax reform.

Housing & Human Services

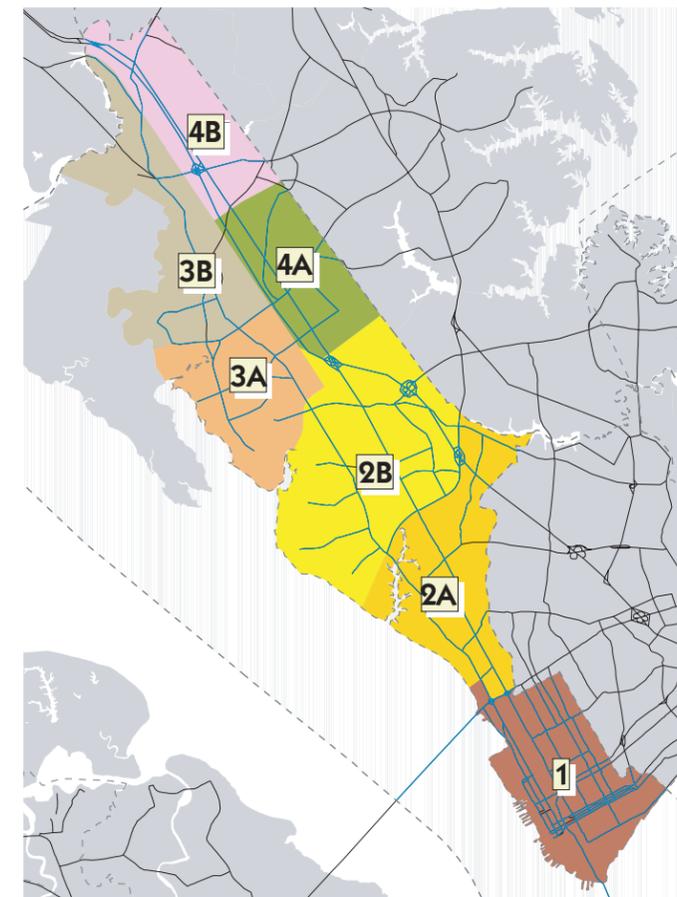
Providing services is important to the quality of life in Hampton Roads. However, providing specialized services to the disadvantaged can place an inordinate financial burden on local governments. The Commission is pursuing research on the issue and potential regional approaches to this critical problem.

Study Shows Traffic Increasing in Newport News

The City of Newport News requested that the HRPDC conduct a study of present and future traffic conditions for morning and afternoon peak travel hours on all interstates, expressways, arterial roads and selected local streets. The primary purpose of the study was to determine the existing level of service for roadways and to predict the level of service in twenty years. Using this analysis, the City will be able to identify projected areas of traffic congestion in 2021 and plan now for improvements.

The study showed that the majority of roadways in Newport News operate at acceptable levels of service during the peak travel hours. However, traffic in Newport News is expected to increase at a faster rate than the expansion of roadways from now until 2021, which will result in deteriorating travel conditions.

While traffic is expected to increase on a majority of roadways by 2021, planned improvements will keep their flow of traffic at the current level of service or better. I-64, from J. Clyde Morris Boulevard to the Hampton City Line, is severely congested during peak hours and will continue to be in 2021. On I-664, average daily traffic is expected to double and almost triple for some segments between now and 2021, due to widening of the highway and the addition of the Third Crossing.



The following roadways are expected to operate at a Level of Service of E or F (severe congestion) during peak hours in 2021. Roadways in red currently are severely congested.

- Bland Blvd – Warwick Blvd to Jefferson Ave
- Chestnut Ave – 25th St to 39th St
- Denbigh Blvd – Lucas Creek Rd to Warwick Blvd
- Denbigh Blvd – Warwick Blvd to Jefferson Ave
- Diligence Dr – J.C. Morris Blvd to Thimble Shoals Blvd
- Fort Eustis Blvd – Warwick Blvd to Jefferson Ave
- Harpersville Rd – East-West Expressway to Jefferson Ave
- Jefferson Ave – Denbigh Blvd to J. C. Morris Blvd
- Jefferson Ave – J.C. Morris Blvd to Main Street
- Jefferson Ave – Main St to Mercury Blvd
- Jefferson Ave – 27th St to 41st St
- Jefferson Ave – 16th St to 25th St
- Marshall Ave – 25th St to 39th St
- McManus Blvd – Siemens Way to Denbigh Blvd
- Mercury Blvd/James River Bridge – Warwick Blvd to Isle of Wight County Line
- Oyster Point Rd – Warwick Blvd to Jefferson Ave
- Warwick Blvd – Snidow Blvd to Denbigh Blvd
- Warwick Blvd – Deep Creek Rd to J.C. Morris Blvd
- Warwick Blvd – Harpersville Rd to Huntington Ave
- Interstate 64 – J.C. Morris Blvd to Hampton City Line
- Interstate 664 – Suffolk City Line to Hampton City Line

- 1** Planning District 1 is expected to experience the highest growth rate for daily vehicle miles traveled in Newport News by 2021, due to significant traffic increases expected on I-664.
- 4B** Planning District 4B is projected to have the highest rate of growth in lane miles by 2021, due to several interstate and arterial road improvements.

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Hearing Impaired may contact the HRPDC through the Virginia Relay Center 1-800-828-1120

May	16	9:30 a.m.	HRPDC Executive Committee/Metropolitan Planning Organization HRPDC Reg'l Board Room
	23	9:30 a.m.	SPSA Board HRPDC Reg'l Board Room
June	20	10:30 a.m.	HRPDC Executive Committee/Metropolitan Planning Organization HRPDC Reg'l Board Room
	27	9:30 a.m.	SPSA Board HRPDC Reg'l Board Room
July	18	10:30 a.m.	HRPDC Quarterly Commission Meeting/ Metropolitan Planning Organization HRPDC Reg'l Board Room
	25	9:30 a.m.	SPSA Board HRPDC Reg'l Board Room

MEETING CALENDAR

The Hampton Roads Review, a quarterly publication of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, is funded by the Federal Highway Administration, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and area local governments.