



CHANNEL MARKERS

A Quarterly Publication of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission

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Pioneer GIS Project Aims to Protect Dragon Run

The Dragon Run Watershed is recognized by the Smithsonian Institute as one of the most pristine watersheds in the country. Residents of the Middle Peninsula also know the value of the Dragon Run, and local actions have sought to protect it. The Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, in an effort to support and promote preservation of the Dragon Run, contracted with Anderson & Associates Professional Design Services of Richmond to create an environmental GIS project that will help protect the 90,000-acre watershed. The project both identifies and quantifies the economic value of the watershed's traditional uses, and will examine the likely effects of development activities in light of current zoning trends.

Support for the Dragon Run Watershed project comes through the Virginia Coastal Program at the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). This and other coastal projects are funded under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), which is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Dragon Run grant provided money for GIS data collection and design, and provides for continued stewardship through its funding of a watershed

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View along the Dragon Run. A GIS project will help protect it for the future.

MPPDC Holds Fall Dinner Meeting

The MPPDC held its Fall Quarterly Dinner Meeting on Wednesday, September 26, 2001, at The Point Restaurant in West Point. The meeting began with a moment of silence in honor of the victims of the September 11th terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C.

Mr. Thomas Murray, Marine Business and Coastal Development Specialist with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, served as featured speaker for the Fall meeting. Mr. Murray's presentation, entitled "Evaluation of Comparative Watercraft Personal Property Taxation in Middle Peninsula Localities," outlined

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IT PAYS TO RIDE WITH A FRIEND

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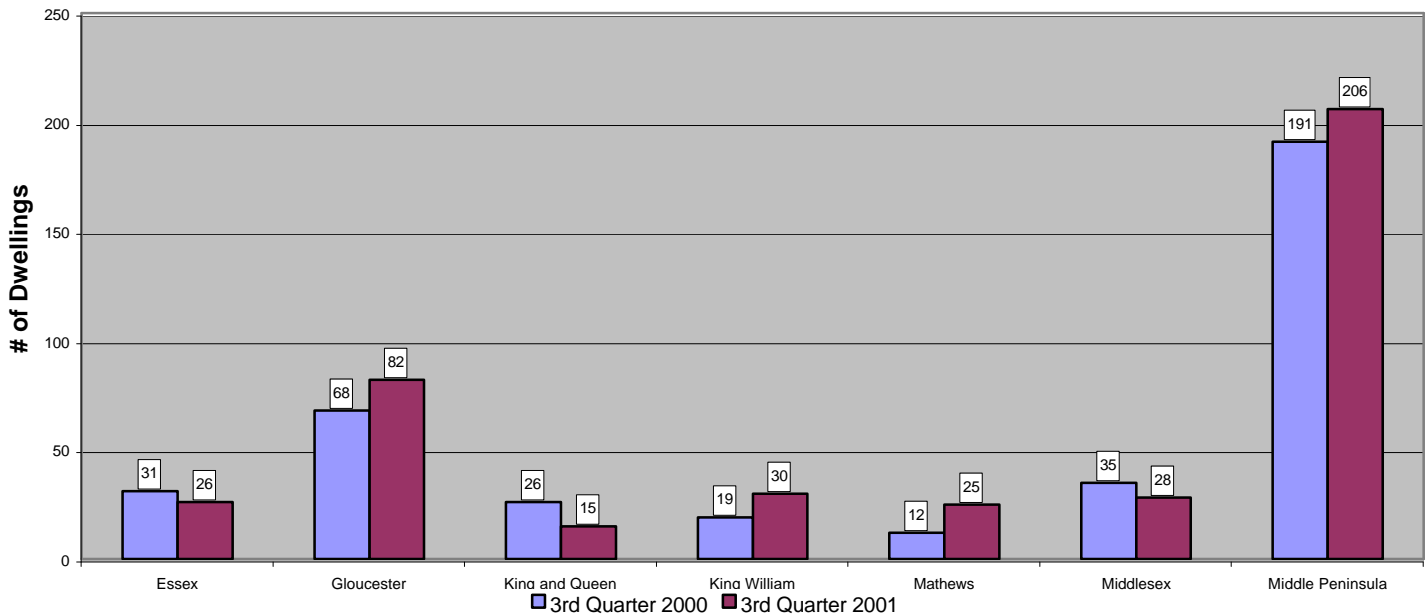
Middle Peninsula RideShare

A Service of the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission

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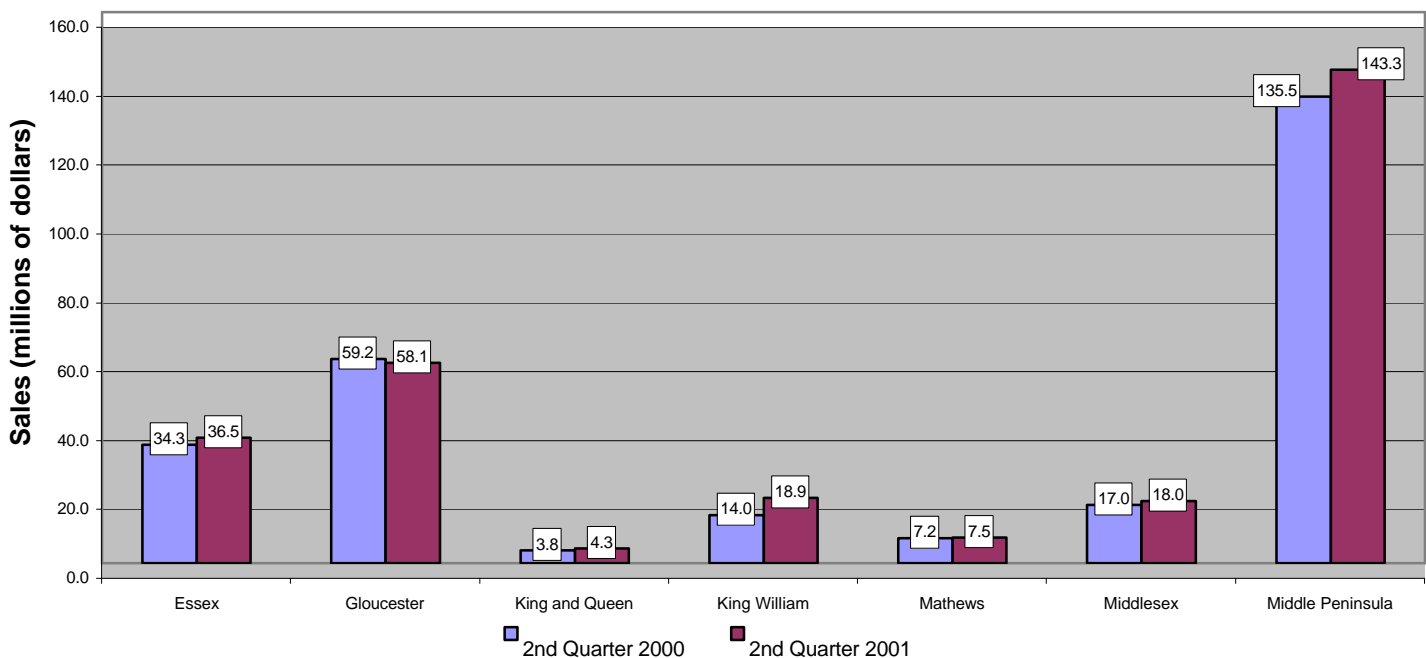
Economic Data

Residential Building Permits Issued



During the third quarter of 2001, a total of 206 residential building permits were issued for the Middle Peninsula. This represents an 8% increase over the third quarter of 2000. When compared with the same quarter last year, King William experienced a 58% growth in the number of permits issued; Mathews more than doubled the number of building permits issued. (Information provided by county building officials)

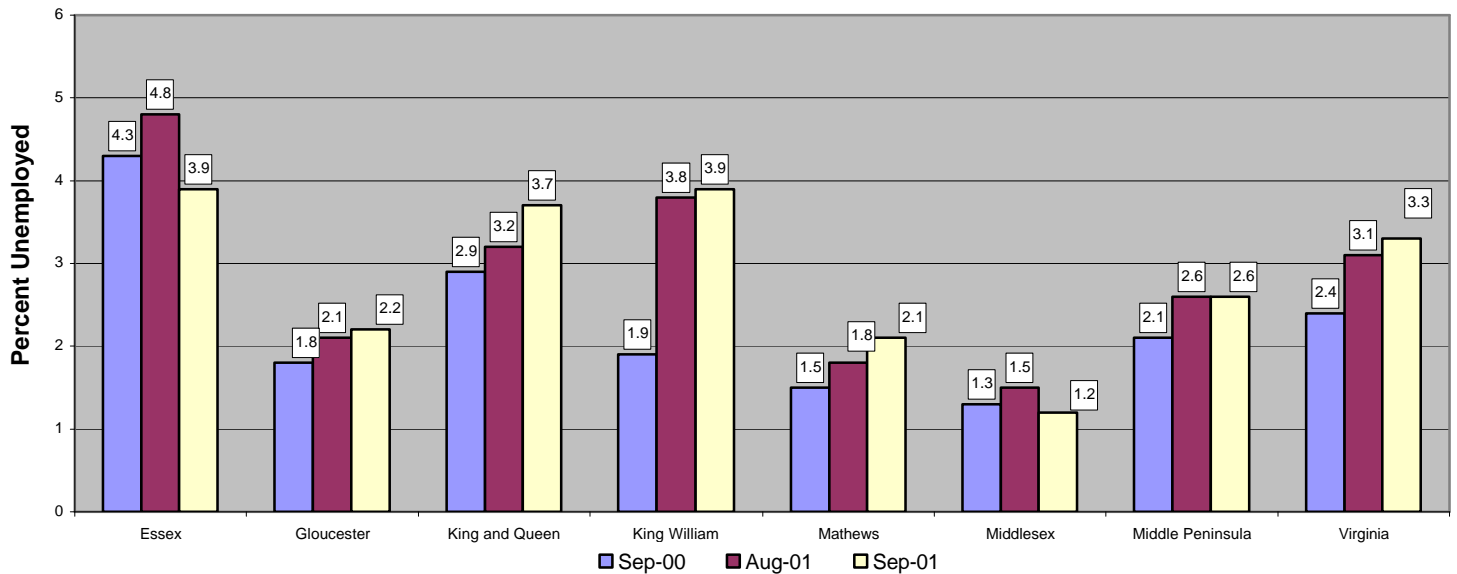
Taxable Sales



A comparison of taxable sales in the second quarters of 2000 and 2001 shows a 6%, or \$7,800,000, increase for the Middle Peninsula region. Taxable sales in most counties increased by an average of 4.3% on the Middle Peninsula during this time period. The exceptions were King William, which experienced an increase of 35%, and Gloucester, whose sales declined by approximately 2%. (Source: Weldon Cooper Center)

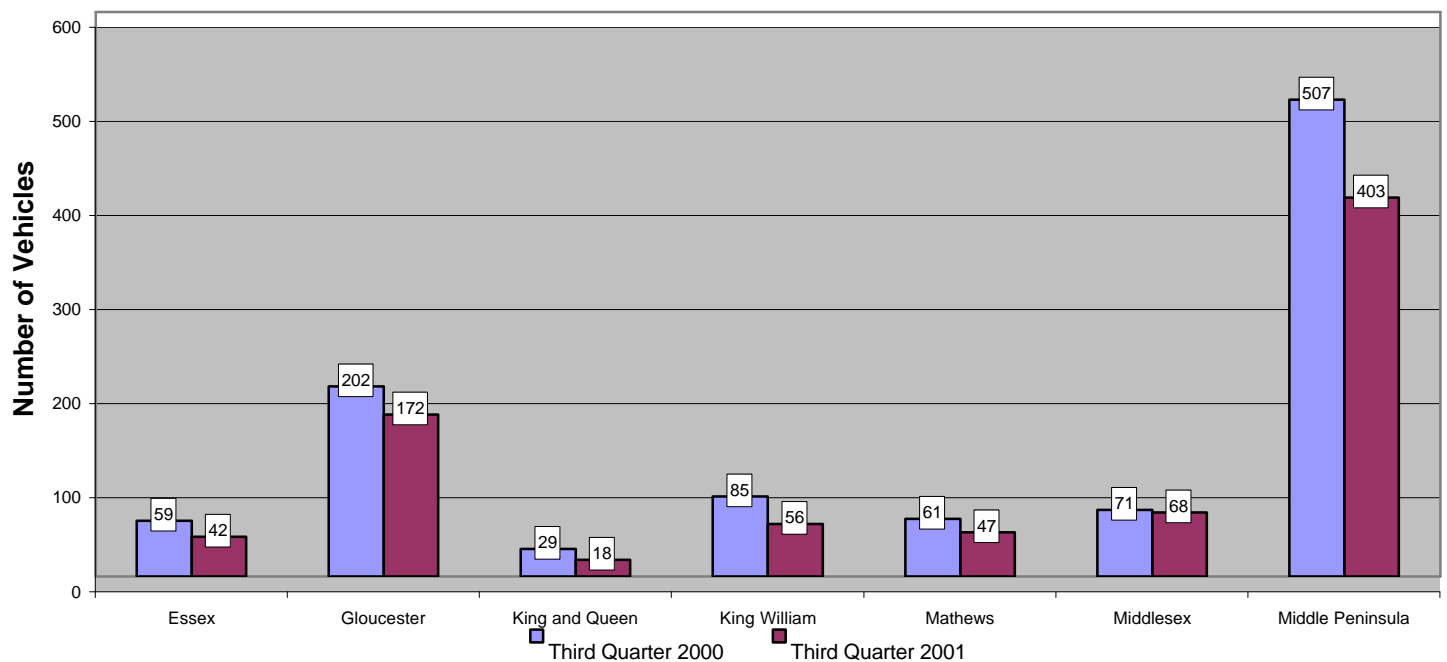
Economic Data

Unemployment Rates



The average Middle Peninsula unemployment rate for September 2001 (2.6%) was lower than Virginia's (3.3%) for the month. Essex (3.9%), King William (3.9%), and King and Queen (3.7%) had rates higher than the state average for the same period, while the other counties were below the state level. Overall for the region, the unemployment rate increased from an average of 2.1% in September 2000 to 2.6% in September 2001. (Source: Virginia Employment Commission)

New Domestic Vehicle Registrations



Middle Peninsula new domestic car registrations decreased 21% from the same period last year, dropping from 507 in the third quarter of 2000 to 403 in the third quarter of 2001. Each of the six Middle Peninsula counties saw varying levels of decrease in new domestic car registrations, ranging from a 4% decline in Middlesex County to a 38% decline in King and Queen County. (Source: DMV)

MPPDC Project Updates

Indian Road Project Progressing in Gloucester County

Construction continues in the Indian Road community of Gloucester County. Currently, one house has been completed and four houses are under construction. The Gloucester County Indian Road Housing Rehabilitation Project has received funding to rehabilitate twenty-one (21) homes in the area.

In October, a community meeting was held at Zion Hill Baptist Church to inform residents who live in the community of opportunities to improve local housing. The Chesapeake Bay Agency on Aging, Gloucester Housing Partnership, Department of Housing and Community Development, Gloucester County and the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission all had representatives on hand to answer the questions of the attendees. More than twenty-five (25) residents attended the meeting to learn about ways to improve their housing conditions.

There will be a Home Maintenance/Financial Workshop on December 11, 2001, at 7:00 PM at Zion Hill Baptist Church. For more information concerning this meeting or the IR project, please contact Todd Rigler at (804) 758-2311 or e-mail mppdc@inna.net.



A house under construction by Gloucester Housing Partnership as part of the Indian Road project. Students in the Partnership's training program are helping build the new house, which will replace a nearby trailer.

(Continued from page 1)

taxing methodology and varying assessments on the Middle Peninsula. Mr. Murray's study revealed a decline in local boating registrations in contrast to growth in registrations at the state level, but it was also noted that further studies are needed to understand choice of location in relation to tax rates. Mr. Murray concluded that the marine industry is addressing tax and uniformity issues to stabilize business locally and gain a share of the larger boat market nationwide.

Mr. Murray's presentation was well-received and generated a good discussion. The Fall meeting concluded after a question and answer period.

MPDSB Holds Annual Luncheon

The Middle Peninsula Disability Services Board held its annual luncheon on October 15, 2001, at The Point Restaurant in West Point. The featured speaker at the luncheon was Bob Krollman from Virginia Assistive Technology Services (VATS). Mr. Krollman provided an informative overview of VATS, and discussed the unique services provided by the program.

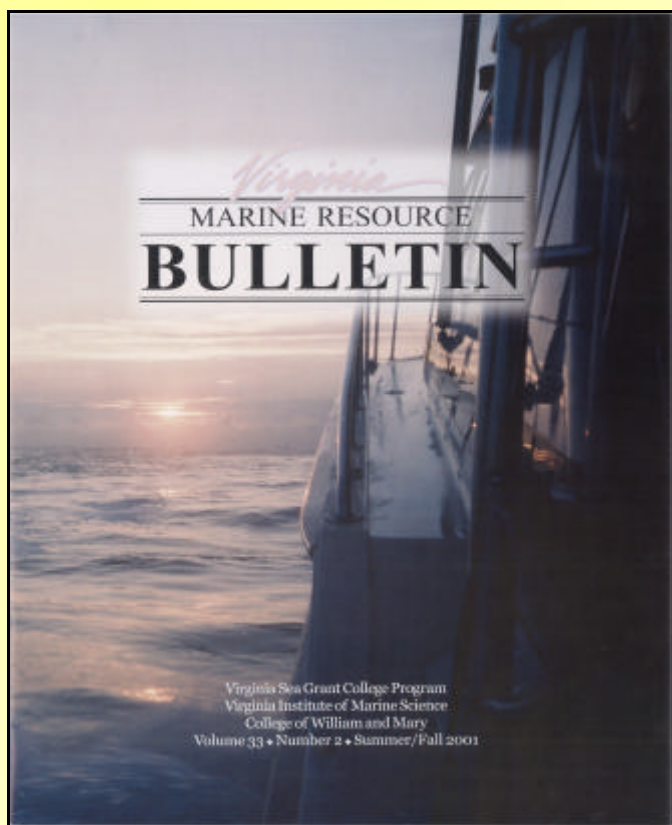
October is Disability Awareness month, and representatives from all of the region's counties, the Department of Rehabilitative Services, and the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission attended the luncheon to honor the work of the DSB.

MPDSB Update

The Rehabilitative Services Incentive Fund Grants awarded to the Essex County Library and the Middle Peninsula Self Help for the Hard of Hearing are progressing smoothly. The MPSHHH has purchased equipment to assist with note taking and captioning equipment, and the Essex Public Library will begin replacing its existing doors with Americans with Disabilities Act compliant doors in the next few months. The new library doors will improve access for all library patrons.

Applications for FY 2003 can be requested through the MPPDC and are due back on January 11, 2001. The next scheduled meeting for the MPDSB is January 14, 2001 at the MPPDC office in Saluda. For more information concerning this project or the DSB, please contact Todd Rigler at (804) 758-2311 or e-mail mppdc@inna.net.

MPPDC Project Updates



Check out the Summer/Fall Issue of the Virginia Marine Resource Bulletin for articles about Urbanna's marina project and water access issues on the Middle Peninsula. The Virginia Marine Resource Bulletin is a publication of the Virginia Sea Grant College Program at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. You may obtain copies by contacting MPPDC at (804)758-2311 or e-mailing us at mppdc@inna.net.

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manager who will use the GIS data that has been collected to monitor conditions along the Dragon Run.

According to Lewis Lawrence, Director of Regional Planning for the MPPDC, this project fosters both environmental stewardship and regional cooperation on the Middle Peninsula. "The Dragon Run Watershed project is unique in that it allows us to work across jurisdictional lines to protect and preserve environmental resources; and it ultimately unites four local governments under one planning umbrella for watershed protection," said Lawrence.

For more information about the Dragon Run GIS Project, contact Lewis Lawrence at (804) 758-2311 or e-mail mppdc@inna.net.

On-Site Program Continues to Provide Assistance to Residents

The MPPDC continues to provide financial assistance for failing onsite wastewater treatment systems through its On-Site Revolving Loan and Grant Program. This program provides low interest loans and/or grants for the repair or replacement of septic systems in owner occupied homes. Repayment terms for any loans are managed in a manner to keep the payments affordable, especially for low to moderate income level individuals.

Now in this third year, most of the Program activity has occurred in 2001. Through October 31, three groups of projects had gone out to bid to repair or replace failing systems. These groups represent 26 individual projects that have been completed or are awaiting construction. The total grant and loan assistance of the approved projects total in excess of \$175,000.

Presently most of the assistance has been provided in Gloucester, Mathews, and Middlesex Counties. The MPPDC has obtained additional funding to map failing systems in Essex, King and Queen, and King William Counties. Owners of failing systems in those localities will be contacted about possible participation in the Program. MPPDC has partnered with the EPA to perform additional educational outreach in targeted communities to repair projects.

If you or anyone you know has a failing septic system, or if you wish to receive more information about the On-Site Program, please contact Tom Brockenbrough, Regional Projects Planner, at (804) 758-2311 or e-mail mppdc@inna.net for additional information.

MPPDC Electronic Resources

www.MPPDC.com - Middle Peninsula PDC Web Site

MPPDC@inna.net - Middle Peninsula PDC E-mail

www.MPDSB.org - Middle Peninsula Disability Services Board Web Site

www.mppdcgis.com - Middle Peninsula Coastal Data Resource Server

MPBDP@inna.net - Middle Peninsula Business Development Partnership E-mail

**MP
BDP****MIDDLE PENINSULA BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENTS****MP-BDP: A Year in Review**

Since the inception of MP-BDP in October, 2000, the program has been busy assisting small businesses and individuals in the Middle Peninsula. The program was able to reach and in most cases exceed all performance goals for the first year. A total of 106 participants enrolled in the 5 training sessions offered by the program, and the staff have provided 364 hours of direct technical assistance to clients. As a result, two loans have been issued to get new businesses started. The program is continuing to work with clients in creating new jobs for the area and helping business owners increase personal wealth.

**Business Training Classes
Coming to King William**

MP-BDP will be presenting its 20-hour Business Training Series in King William County from January 10 to February 5, 2002. Classes will be held from 6:30 until 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday nights in the Community Room of the Leroy T. McAllister Human Services Building. Topics covered include Business Insurance Requirements, Personal Credit, Legal Issues in Starting a Business, Financial Forecasting, Advertising and Marketing for your Business, Proper Record Keeping for your Business, Business Taxes, Developing a Business Plan, Business Feasibility, and a Summary Session dealing with specific business issues. The goal of the class is to provide participants with information to aid in starting a small business and information to help maintain an ongoing business. Registration is limited to 20 participants. Classes fill quickly. If you are interested in attending, please contact William Smith at **(804) 758-4917**.

New Residential Trash Pickup Service in Middlesex

MP-BDP worked with Clinton Roye of the Waterview area of Middlesex County to start a Residential Trash Pick Up Service for the county. Mr. Roye completed the Business Training Series held in Saluda in January of this year and has worked closely with William Smith to develop a workable Business Plan. Mr. Roye applied for start up funds through the program and the loan was granted on October 11, 2001. MP-BDP is proud to have been able to help Mr. Roye reach his goal of becoming an entrepreneur. MP-BDP will continue to work with Mr. Roye as his business continues to grow.

**MP-BDP Thanks its Steering
Committee and Support**

MP-BDP would like to thank the members of its Steering Committee who played a material part in setting the foundation for this program. Committee members include: Don Parker, Janet Leigh, Betty Miller, Danielle Robinson, Ann Richardson, Leslie Campbell, Dan Kavanagh, Dianne Hall, Sandra Wilson, John Clickener, and Mark Milstead. MP-BDP would also like to thank three local banks whose participation makes it possible to provide Micro-Lending services. They are: Chesapeake Bank, Citizens & Farmers Bank, and Southside Bank. Local support this year is being provided by Virginia's River Country.

Getting Ready for Tax Time?**Small Business Training Workshop**

**Thursday, December 13, 2001
6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

**Middle Peninsula Planning District
Commission Board Room
Saluda, Virginia**

Workshop will focus on information needed to have your Accountant/Tax Preparer complete your returns. What questions should you ask? What format should your information be in? See how proper planning can save you money.

Limited Space Available!!!

To register call William Smith, Program Director, at (804) 758-4917.

Mission: "to increase Middle Peninsula household income and reduce underemployment and unemployment by providing individuals – particularly minorities and youth – with access to the means to start or expand small businesses without having to leave the Middle Peninsula."

For information on all of the current MPBDP Projects, e-mail MPBDP@inna.net.

Events Calendar

December 2001

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
3	4	5	6	7 Virginia Peninsula Public Service Authority 9AM
10 Middle Peninsula Land Trust 7:00PM	11	12 Local Planners 9:30 AM MPBDP 7:00 PM	13	14 MP/NN LGA (at NNPDC) 10:00 AM
17 MPPDC Staff Meeting 9:00 AM	18 Middlesex County Communications 7:00PM	19 MPPDC Legislative Dinner Meeting (Lowery's) 6:00 PM	20	21 Winter Begins
24 Christmas Eve-Office Closed	25 Christmas Day-Office Closed	26	27	28
31 New Year's Eve-Office Closed				

January 2002

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1 New Year's Day-Office Closed	2	3 Middlesex Master Gardeners 9:30 AM	4
7	8	9 Local Planners 9:30AM MPBDP 7:00PM	10	11 MP LGA Meeting 9:00AM
14 MP Land Trust 7:00 PM	15	16 PSAP 10:30 AM	17 Public Education Consortium 9:00 AM	18 Lee-Jackson Holiday-Office Closed
21 Martin Luther King Day-Office Closed	22 MPPDC Staff Meeting 9:00 AM	23 MPPDC Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM	24	25 MP Juvenile Detention Commission 9:30 AM
28	29	30	31	

February 2002

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7 Middlesex Master Gardeners 9:30 AM	8 MP LGA 9:00AM
11 MP Land Trust 7:00 PM	12	13 Local Planners 9:30 AM Dragon Run Steering Committee 7:30 PM MPBDP 7:00PM	14	15
18 President's Day- Office Closed	19	20	21	22
25 MPPDC Staff Meeting 9:00 AM	27	28 MPPDC Monthly Meeting 7:00 PM		

Unless otherwise indicated, all meetings are held at the MPPDC Offices in Saluda. The site of the Quarterly PDC Dinner Meeting will be announced in a mailing prior to that meeting. All times and dates are subject to change. Call the MPPDC at (804) 758-2311 for additional information.

MPPDC News



Tom Brockenbrough recently joined the MPPDC staff as a GIS Specialist. Tom comes to us from Accomack County where he worked the past six years managing their GIS as well as handling Bay Act enforcement, Erosion and Sediment Control, and other planning duties. Prior to that he worked in banking and for a Member of Congress. Tom received his Master of Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia and his Bachelor's in Political Science from American University. He will be responsible for the MPPDC GIS system, as well as the On Site Program. Tom is originally from the Richmond area and is presently enjoying living in Essex County.



Conference News:

Lewis Lawrence and Tom Brockenbrough attended the Virginia GIS Conference in Roanoke, VA.

Todd Rigler attended the Virginia Housing Conference in Roanoke, VA.

William Smith attended the Virginia Microenterprise Network Conference in Richmond, VA.

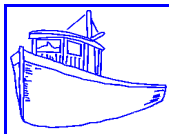
Claire Jones attended the Virginia Transportation Conference in Lexington, VA.



Look for the Spring Issue of Channel Markers in March 2002.

Staff

Executive Director	Director of Planning	Administrative Assistant	Business Development Partnership
Dan Kavanagh	Lewis Lawrence	Barbara Zimmerman	William Smith
Regional Projects Planner	Regional Projects Planner	Secretary	GIS Specialist
Todd Rigler	Claire Jones	Rose Lewis	Tom Brockenbrough



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Created in 1972, pursuant to the Regional Cooperation Act, the Commission is a confederation of nine local governments established to plan for the orderly and efficient physical, social and economic development of Virginia's Middle Peninsula region. Activities and policies of the Commission are set by Commissioners, who are appointed by the local governing bodies. The Commission provides its member local governments with planning, coordination, technical assistance, policy analysis, and management services in a wide array of program areas including information management, water quality, community development, demographic and economic analysis, transportation, and housing services. Channel Markers is published quarterly by the MPPDC, PO Box 286, Saluda, Virginia 23149. The Executive Director is Dan Kavanagh, and the editor of Channel Markers is Claire Jones. Comments should be addressed to the Editor.