

DVRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ACHIEVING THE VISION: DVRPC PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN FOR 2025 TO BE PUBLISHED IN OCTOBER

Just imagine...a Delaware Valley Region in the years ahead that features revitalized communities, preserved farmland and open space, an enhanced identity and character, and a landscape that links transportation options with sound land use decisions.

It's possible if the goals and policies found in Horizons, DVRPC's Year 2025 Proposed Land Use Plan, are realized. The Plan envisions a bold concept for the Delaware Valley's future growth and development. While achieving the proposed vision will not be easy, it provides an overall goal that requires the accomplishment of definite actions over the next 25 years. The proposed vision is intended to be proactive and action-oriented. It is not based on a static plan that keeps things the way they are, but focuses on building a future that responds to the region's identified chal-

lenges and leads to the creation of sound communities, a healthy environment and a stable foundation for economic development and growth.

Approximately six years ago, DVRPC prepared the Year 2020 Long-Range Plan, which included an extensive list of goals, policies, actions and recommended implementation strategies. The broad vision of DVRPC's Year 2020 Plan, "...to create a more efficient, competitive and sustainable region", still applies to the proposed Year 2025 Plan.

“The proposed vision is intended to be proactive and action-oriented. It is not based on a static plan...but focuses on building a future that responds to the region's identified challenges.”

The current applicability of these goals and policies has been reinforced by the responses to the surveys that were included

with Year 2025 Plan Reports 1 and 2, as well as the public comments received at four community workshops held in the Fall of 1999. Specifically, the attendees expressed strong support for policies and future investment priorities that strive to:

- **Revitalize the region's core cities and older suburbs;**
- **Maintain existing infrastructure systems;**
- **Minimize development of new highways;**
- **Expand public transit service and alternative modes like walking and bicycling; and**
- **Preserve significant open space and farmland resources.**

Attendees and survey respondents also supported the overall concept of developing an updated regional plan that respects the diverse geography and development character of the Delaware Valley Region.

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DVRPC LOOKS AT FIRST GENERATION SUBURBS

DVRPC recently completed a detailed study of an area which is characteristic of the region's first generation suburbs the local governments that comprise the William Penn School District in eastern Delaware County, Pennsylvania. The District, located between Upper Darby Township and the City of Philadelphia, is composed of six small boroughs: Aldan, Colwyn, Darby, East Lansdowne, Lansdowne and Yeadon. *The term "first generation suburb" generally refers to the earliest group of townships and boroughs to develop outside of a region's urban core.* The purpose of this study is to compile and analyze historic, demographic and economic information and to formulate potential revitalization strategies for the school district and its member municipalities.

Once some of the area's most prosperous communities with sound residential neighborhoods, the six municipalities are currently facing a variety of fiscal, social, and economic challenges. These challenges include the continuing loss of population and jobs; increasing school enrollment; a relatively low percentage of residents with college degrees; and a low median household income. Additionally, the communities have an older housing stock and aging infrastructure system; a predominance of residential land uses; a high percentage of renter-occupied units; and a lack of vacant, developable land.

Many of the problems facing the region's central cities and first generation suburbs, including municipalities in the William Penn School District, are the result of a continuing regional pattern of decentralization and disinvestment. While municipal officials can and should pursue local initiatives that help to mitigate specific problems

facing their communities, long-term solutions and a reversal of the continuing loss of both people and jobs can best be accomplished through broader, cooperative regional approaches. Thus, the report recommends the implementation of regional and county-wide planning and growth management strategies, including targeting future infrastructure investments to existing developed areas to discourage continued development in the region's "outer ring" communities.

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Given the fiscal disparity that exists between the region's oldest communities and its more affluent outer ring municipalities, the report also recommends investigating long-term alternatives to the property tax as the primary means of financing local services, especially education. Such action would discourage individual municipalities from permitting tax-generating development regardless of its potential impact on neighboring communities or its corridor and region-wide benefits and costs. Alternatives include regional tax-base sharing, earned income taxes or increased "sin" taxes on alcohol and tobacco products. Another option may be a major overhaul of the way that Pennsylvania funds education, an alternative currently being debated in the General Assembly.

Finally, the report makes recommendations to state, county and municipal officials with the goal of alleviating some of the problems experienced in the William Penn School District and facilitating community revitalization, including the following:

➤ *Municipal officials should participate in a multi-municipal coalition and implement intermunicipal strategies to increase the effectiveness of service deliveries, reduce costs and increase their political clout.*

➤ *Municipal officials should review their local comprehensive plans and zoning regulations and revise them and coordinate as necessary, to support existing businesses, attract new employers and support in-fill residential development where appropriate.*

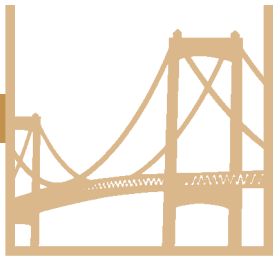
➤ *Municipal officials should work with the Delaware County Commerce Department to identify and take advantage of all available economic development programs and incentives.*

➤ *The William Penn School District's administration should review their current policies as they relate to student achievement and continuing education opportunities for adults and explore any potential opportunities for improvement, including improved college-preparatory curriculums, enhanced job-readiness programs and adult education programs.*

➤ *Residents in the study area should strive for increased participation in the decision-making process within their community and critically assess the consequences of actions affecting local governments and the school district, and should actively participate in Borough Council meetings, planning and zoning board hearings and school board meetings.*

DVRPC hopes that a partnership of county and local officials, with the assistance of state and federal financial resources and programs, will provide the catalyst that will result in an enhanced quality of life for the William Penn School District's municipalities in the years ahead.

To obtain a copy of this report, please contact DVRPC's Information Services Center at 215-238-2828.



Summer Temps Drop, But Ozone Awareness Is On The Rise

While temperatures this summer weren't the hottest on record, activities heated up for Delaware Valley's Ozone Action Partnership. The Partnership is a coalition of business, government and environmental groups, from *Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania*, that work collaboratively to inform the public of ways in which to improve and maintain the region's air quality.

In May, the Ozone Action Partnership launched its fifth season with a reception and luncheon at the Sheraton Rittenhouse Square Hotel. Touting themselves as "America's First Environmentally Smart

members of the media. In addition, awards were presented to Ozone Action (OA) Partners for outstanding contributions to the Partnership and to a member of the media for consistent and dedicated coverage of the Ozone Action forecast. Recognized at the event were: DART First State, New Jersey Transit, WWDB Radio, and Sunoco.

This summer, Ozone Action had tremendous success with its new Advocacy Program, which involves OA Partners sponsoring the Environmental Protection Agency's *It All Adds Up To Cleaner Air* messages. Three sep-

families from diverse backgrounds to experience music, art, education and food of different cultures.

Ozone Action featured a Cooling Tent where Unity Day attendees went to cool off and learn more about voluntary pollution prevention. More than 500,000 people attend the event each year. DVRPC staff distributed more than 1000 Ozone Action giveaways and brochures and received information about potential Ozone Action partners.

Administered by DVRPC, the summer-long Ozone Action Program alerts the public of ground-level ozone and forecasts Ozone Action Days when levels are unhealthy. When an Ozone Action day is forecast, employers, the media and DVRPC spread the news, asking people to take cost-efficient, voluntary actions to reduce emis-



DVRPC staff distribute information and share a healthy "ozone" message with participants in **Unity Day on the Parkway**, an August radio-sponsored event that draws more than half a million people to Center City.

Hotel," the Sheraton promotes awareness and leads by example through the use of all organic or recycled products and fresh air supply grills throughout the hotel. Emphasizing the importance of public transportation in reducing motor vehicle emissions that contribute to ground-level ozone, this year's event brought together nearly 100 state and local officials, business partners and



DVRPC's Ron Roggenburk, Manager of Air Quality Planning, shares vital ozone awareness tips with families on **Unity Day**.

arate messages aired during the news on KYW-TV throughout July, each with sponsors from the business community and local government agencies. We have also been very lucky this summer because the weather has brought us only two Ozone Action Days.

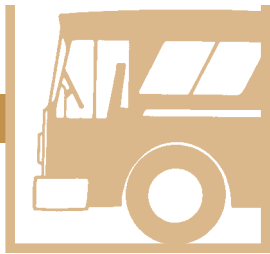
The major event of this summer took place in August when the Ozone Action Partnership sponsored Unity Day on the Parkway, a premier urban event which draws



Ozone Action partners and stakeholders celebrate the season's kickoff at the Sheraton Rittenhouse Square.

sions by using transit or car pooling to work, refueling cars in the evening when the sun is down, and postponing lawn mowing with gas-powered mowers. Most people are unaware that ground-level ozone, an odorless, colorless gas, can rob them of needed oxygen.

Additional information about the Ozone Action Program, as well as printed materials are available by contacting DVRPC at 215-592-1800. ☎



DETERMINING TRANSPORTATION NEEDS OF THE REGION'S MAJOR EMPLOYERS

In an effort to update our 2020 Long Range Plan, DVRPC staff continues preparation of *Horizons, The Year 2025 Plan for the Delaware Valley*. One of the key objectives of the plan is to aid in the Delaware Valley's economic development. DVRPC believes the input of the business community is essential in determining what types of transportation projects should be encouraged, and in what areas of the region. *To gain information from area businesses, DVRPC administered a fifteen question survey to major employers in the Delaware Valley.* This survey was designed to determine attitudes about transportation behavior and facilities among business executives in the region.

A total of 359 surveys were completed and returned to DVRPC from major employers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania and Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer Counties in New Jersey. Three groups of issues were presented in the survey – commuting behavior, goods movement and resource utilization.

COMMUTING BEHAVIOR

Survey respondents found improvements must be made to increase the appeal of transit since the automobile is still seen as the most practical mode for commuting. In fact, half of all employers felt that increasing the capacity of the region's highways was a major improvement that would benefit their businesses.

Improvements to both pedestrian and bicycle facilities are necessary according to survey respondents: 80 percent of whom felt there were significant hazards to bicycling within 2 miles of their workplace. Half of the employers from both the

Pennsylvania and New Jersey suburbs felt that walking to their workplaces from nearby transit stops was unsafe as well.

GOODS MOVEMENT

As far as shipping either products to customers or pre-production materials to factories, fewer than 10 percent of employers in the region found any mode other than trucking to be a practical alternative. Recent mergers of rail freight companies may encourage better services in the long run, so that rail freight may be restored as a competitive mode for shipping and receiving goods. However, only 10 percent of employers felt that restoring the competitive nature of rail was of critical importance. On the other hand, over 30 percent of respondents said the most important improvement to the transportation system would be increasing highway capacity. Such reliance on trucking could pose continued safety and congestion concerns for the region's highways.

ENVIRONMENT

Survey respondents in the suburbs felt that open space preservation was significant, but employers in the city did not share that view. According to respondents, the biggest environmental problems in Philadelphia are air quality and waste disposal. Although employers in the city did not view preserving open space as the most significant environmental problem, they still opted to allot significant resources to open space acquisition.

Results of this study were presented to both the DVRPC Board and the Regional Citizens Committee. **For more detailed survey results, contact DVRPC's Information Services Center at 215-238-2828.**



TIP DELIVERS FREIGHT AND JOBS

Partnering with business interests and funding freight projects is a top priority for DVRPC. The Commission recently adopted a \$4.8 billion Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which flexed its muscle to boost the local economy. The TIP will improve access to work sites, speed deliveries of freight, and help create thousands of permanent jobs.

Fifty-five TIP projects lead the push for a better business climate. The projects range from increasing rail capacity at a marine terminal to constructing a truck climbing lane. And local residents and commuters will benefit from safety and routing upgrades.

"These projects are a real shot in the arm," says Kelvin MacKavanagh, of CSX Transportation and Chairman of the Delaware Valley Goods Movement Task Force's Planning Subcommittee. "They show that NJ DOT, PennDOT, the counties and cities are serious about goods movement."

A new connector road, where a former steel plant is being redeveloped into an office complex in Chester County, is just one example of leveraging the TIP to bolster economic vitality. \$9 million of private and public funds have been pulled together to fund this essential transportation improvement.

For further information about the Goods Movement program, contact Ted Dahlburg at 215-238-2844.

DVRPC INSTALLS NEW BOARD OFFICERS

To guide us through another year of sound decision-making and proactive planning, the DVRPC Board recently elected **Timothy J. Carson, Esq.**, (Pennsylvania Governor's Appointee) as the FY 2001 Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee. The Board also elected Vice-Chairman **Ridgeley P. Ware** (Burlington County), Secretary **Charles H. Martin** (Chairman, Bucks County Commissioners), and Treasurer **James Weinstein** (Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Transportation). Their terms will continue through June 30, 2001.

Timothy J. Carson, Esq., a senior partner in the law firm Saul, Ewing, Remick & Saul, was vice-chairman of the DVRPC Board in FY98. He is a graduate of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania and Villanova School of Law. Presently, he serves as Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Bar Association. He has received numerous awards from the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the Philadelphia Bar Association, among other organizations. In 1998, he was awarded the Pennsylvania Bar Association's distinguished *President's Award* for outstanding leadership and service. He served on the Board of Governors of the Philadelphia Bar Association (1997-99). In 1994, Carson was a member of then Governor-Elect Tom Ridge's Transition Team. He was a member of the Montgomery County Open Space Task Force and the Lower Merion Preservation Trust. Carson is a frequent speaker and panelist at professional seminars conferences and symposia on the subjects of public finance and the regeneration of the nation's infrastructure.

Over the years, **Ridgeley Ware** has been a faithful DVRPC supporter and has served as a Board officer several times. Ware boasts more than 40 years of experience as a real estate professional in all areas of finance; real estate appraisal; property purchase; management and marketing; and



Current Board Chairman, **Timothy Carson** presents past chair, **Jerrold Colton**, with a plaque to honor his distinguished service to the Commission during FY 2000.

investment counseling. In 1975, he formed Ware Associates to provide investment counseling for private and institutional clients. Recently, he was appointed by New Jersey Governor Christine Whitman to sit on the Regional Intergovernmental Transportation Coordinating Study Commission (RITCSC). He is a former trustee of the Moorestown Community House and served on the Moorestown Board of Education. Ware, a graduate of the University of Buffalo, served as DVRPC's Chairman of the Board and Executive Committee in FY96 and FY98.

Charles Martin has over 30 years of professional, corporate experience in customer service and public relations including media relations, consumer affairs, public policy, emergency planning and quality management. Elected to a four-year term as a Bucks County Commissioner in 1995, he served as Chairman for two of his four years. A graduate of Lebanon Valley College, Martin served 13 years as Public Affairs Officer for the Bucks County division of the Philadelphia Electric Company

(now PECO Energy). He is currently on the Board of Directors of the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania, the Bucks County Hero Scholarship Fund and is a member of the Southampton Republican Club.

James Weinstein was named Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Transportation by Governor Christine Whitman and confirmed by the State Senate in December, 1998. The Commissioner's duties include Chairman of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Transit Corporation and member of the board of each state's three toll road authorities and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. He now oversees 17,000 employees and a 3.2 billion budget. A former New Jersey Department of Transportation Executive Assistant and Communications Director, the Seton Hall University graduate began his career as a journalist. He has served as the first Chairman of the Port of Philadelphia and Camden and is former Commissioner of the Delaware River Port Authority. ☼



In the Year 2025 Land Use Plan, which will be available in October as *Horizons Report #3*, DVRPC emphasizes policies and planning approaches that reflect the region's different community types, including Core Cities, First Generation Suburbs, Growing Suburbs and Rural Areas. Just as this Land Use Plan provides recommendations and strategies unique to the needs of these different community types, the Transportation Plan (to be published during the Winter of 2001) will also offer policies and projects appropriate to each of these areas. ☼

DVRPC'S MULTI-YEAR 2001-2004 TIP ADOPTED

At their meeting on July 27, 2000, the DVRPC Board adopted the FY 2001-2004 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for southwestern New Jersey and southeastern Pennsylvania. The TIP



DVRPC's Associate Director for Transportation Planning, Chick Dougherty, presents the FY 2001-2004 TIP to the DVRPC Board.

totaled \$1 billion for the New Jersey portion of the region, and \$3.8 billion for DVRPC's Pennsylvania subregion.

Required by federal law, the TIP not only lists specific projects, but also documents the anticipated schedule and cost for each project phase (preliminary engineering, final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction). A project's inclusion in the TIP signifies regional agreement on the priority of the project and establishes eligibility for federal funding. Although it is not a final schedule of project implementation, inclusion of a project phase in the TIP means that it is seriously expected to be implemented during the TIP time period.

To request a copy of the FY 2001 TIP contact DVRPC's Information Services Center at 215-238-2828 or visit www.dvrpc.org ☼

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Since its establishment in 1965, DVRPC has been instrumental in ensuring the orderly growth of the bi-state region. As the federally-funded metropolitan planning organization, DVRPC also provides data and consulting services to public and private sector organizations, and fosters cooperation among all levels of government. Shown above is the nine-county Delaware Valley region.