


DVRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

DVRPC CO-HOSTS DELAWARE RIVER REGIONAL SUMMIT



In December 2000, DVRPC, along with the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) and the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA), was proud to host a regional summit to discuss the current and future status of the Delaware River. This historic one-day summit, called **One Region-One River**, focused on the Delaware River as the tie that binds our region together.

Throughout the day, representatives of the port and the private sector provided updates on the current and future status of the economy, environment and communities surrounding the Delaware River. Leaders from DVRPC, DRBC and DRPA signed an historic Cooperative Accord representing a commitment to work together to preserve the future of the River region.



*DVRPC along with DRBC and DRPA hosted **One Region-One River**, a one-day summit devoted to the future status of the Delaware River. Leaders from DVRPC, DRBC and DRPA signed the Cooperative Accord committing to work together to preserve the future of the River region.*

Summit panels were designed to cover a variety of river related issues including:

- **Charting the Course for the 21st Century**
Current Activities and a Future Vision of the River
- **Quiche or Cargo?**
Waterfront Development as a Key to Community Revitalization
- **Ships and Shad**
Maintaining a Vibrant Port and a Healthy Environment

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SAFEGUARDING NEW JERSEY'S NATURAL RESOURCES

Man's impact on watersheds continues to make the protection and preservation of our water resources a high priority. As the guardian of responsible regional growth, DVRPC is working to ensure that efforts to safeguard the region's watersheds are an integral part of regional planning. This summer, New Jersey Governor **Christine Whitman** awarded DVRPC a contract to draft a watershed preservation and improvement plan for New Jersey's Lower Delaware River Tributaries. In carrying out this work, DVRPC is working collaboratively with citizens on watershed planning in different parts of the region.

"As the guardian of responsible regional growth, DVRPC is working to ensure that efforts to safeguard the region's watersheds are an integral part of regional planning."

A kickoff meeting, which addressed planning for Watershed Management Area 18, was held last September at Gloucester County College in Deptford, NJ. Special guest **Michael Rockland**, Chairman of the American Studies Program at Rutgers University and author of *Snowshoeing through Sewers* and *Looking for America on the New Jersey Turnpike*, spoke on the relationship between nature and our urban environment. Featured speaker **Tom Schueler**, Executive Director of the Center for Watershed Protection and a nationally recognized authority on watershed conservation, highlighted state-of-the-art approaches to improving water quality and the protection of natural resources. Staff from DVRPC and the New Jersey Department



Dozens gather at Gloucester County College in Deptford, New Jersey to kick off planning efforts for Watershed Management Area 18. This meeting and additional events are only part of a larger DVRPC effort to plan for the preservation of watershed areas throughout the Delaware Valley Region.

of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) led discussions on the proposed approach to watershed planning in Area 18.

Area 18, one of twenty watershed management areas in New Jersey, is part of the Lower Delaware River Region. The watershed encompasses parts or all of 64 municipalities in eleven Delaware River Tributaries extending from Swede Run in Burlington County south to Oldmans Creek, on the Gloucester-Salem county line.

In October and November, DVRPC hosted watershed sub-area meetings in Pennsauken, South Harrison Township and Washington Township. The meetings featured an educational component on watershed planning as well as discussions in which citizens had the opportunity to provide input on planning initiatives aimed at improving water quality and

protecting natural resources. DVRPC is coordinating the efforts of private and public sector groups in Area 18 to acquire natural open space; restore riparian buffers and degraded stream banks; monitor water quality; improve urban and suburban land management practices; establish stream watch programs; and create better environmental education programs. The completed plan will also detail strategies for limiting non-point source pollution, such as fertilizers and pesticides, fluids and residues from vehicles and streets, and floatable litter.

These activities are only part of a larger DVRPC effort to plan for the preservation of watershed areas throughout the Delaware Valley Region. Recently, NJDEP Commissioner **Robert Shinn** awarded DVRPC a contract to create a plan for the Crosswicks Creek Watershed

Story continued on page 7.



OUR REGIONAL REPORT CARD

DVRPC Releases Regional Indicators

Whether we're gearing up for a revision to the region's long-range plan or weighing the environmental impacts of corridor improvements and development, evaluation of our past, present and future is essential to DVRPC's planning efforts.

In order to track progress toward the goals of the Year 2020 Long-Range Plan and refocus for *Horizons*, the Year 2025 Plan, DVRPC has released a report called **Regional Indicators: Measuring Our Progress to 2025** which analyzes the current conditions and progress in eight focus areas—physical form, traffic congestion, environment, air quality, economic development, freight movement, mobility and housing. A total of 26 regional indicators were selected that reflect the trends or conditions within these eight issue areas. Of the 26 indicators, eleven show an improving trend, six represent a declining trend and nine demonstrate mixed results.

The findings, which follow, represent a synopsis of the issues explored in **Regional Indicators: Measuring Our Progress to 2025**. The report provides an in-depth look at the full list of indicators, a complete analysis of the results and a background that will help identify the assets and challenges facing the region. The sound use of these findings along with the collaboration of government officials and concerned citizens will bring the Delaware Valley one step closer to the vision set forth in our long range plan. With careful planning, tomorrow's Delaware Valley can be a sustainable region that boasts a strong economy, utilizes a seamless transportation system and preserves the region's precious natural environment.

Summary Of Regional Indicators Progress

+ = positive regional trend; - = negative regional trend; +/- = mixed regional trend

PROGRESS TREND	PHYSICAL FORM
+/-	Growth Patterns: Philadelphia continues to lose population as suburbs grow
-	Land Development: Rate of land development far exceeds rate of population growth
-	Farmland Preservation: Farmland declines despite preservation effort
+/-	Parks and Recreational Open Space: Protected open space increases, but more is needed
+	Commercial Land Use: Office occupancy rates increase across the region
	TRAFFIC CONGESTION
-	Auto Usage: Traffic grows around the region
+/-	Public Transit Usage: Transit ridership holds steady in recent years following previous losses
-	Vehicles: Vehicle growth far exceeds population growth
	ENVIRONMENT
-	Waste Generation: Per capita solid waste increases in New Jersey, remains steady in PA
+	Recycling: Recycling rate improves throughout region
+	Water Quality: Delaware River water quality generally exceeds standards
+	Water Withdrawal: Water usage declines in region
+/-	Energy Consumption: Energy usage in PA and NJ less than national average, but increasing at a faster rate
	AIR QUALITY
+/-	Ozone Pollution: Air quality improves, but still falls below standards
-	Drive Alone: Use of single occupant vehicles increases in all counties
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
+	Employment Growth: Employment grows in all counties except Philadelphia
+	Income Growth: Regional income exceeds national average, grows at similar rate
+	Unemployment Rate: Unemployment rate declines in all counties since 1995
	FREIGHT MOVEMENT
+/-	Port: General cargo increases since 1990, bulk cargo declines slightly
+	Air: Air cargo nearly doubles since 1990
+/-	Truck: Truck traffic increases throughout region
	MOBILITY
+	Safety: Automobile crashes decline significantly since 1988, increase slightly since 1995
+	Road Condition: Roadway conditions improve since 1990
+/-	Reliability of Public Transit: On time performance of public transit varies among systems
	HOUSING
+	Housing Affordability: Earnings increases exceed rate of housing cost increases
+/-	Housing Prices: Regional average housing price now less than national average



REFOCUSING OUR REGIONAL PRIORITIES

New initiatives from a Fall 2000 visioning workshop have brought DVRPC's FY 2002 Planning Work Program into sharper focus, lending more importance to certain projects that tackle issues of regional significance. The FY 2002 Planning Work Program was adopted at the January 2001 Board Meeting. The document, which is available for review at www.dvrpc.org, outlines all of the federally funded planning projects slated for the nine-county region from July 1, 2001 to June 30, 2002. The listing includes DVRPC projects, as well as projects planned by member governments and transit organizations.



Tom TenEyck (PennDot) and Ted Dahlburg (DVRPC) generate discussion of highlighted issues.

At the workshop, DVRPC Commissioners were asked to reestablish planning priorities for the region. Board members had the opportunity to review six areas of special concern including, in order of importance: suburban sprawl, older suburbs and boroughs, infrastructure priorities, regional

economic development, inter-municipal cooperation and open space.

Workshop participants broke into six groups for in-depth discussions of the highlighted issues. Attendees were charged not only with exploring the issues, but brain-



At the visioning workshop, DVRPC Executive Director John Coscia, solicits input from Board members and encourages participation.

storming an expanded role for DVRPC to play in addressing the challenges presented by each issue. Based on the issues explored, the Board focused on three new initiatives to be undertaken by DVRPC in the new Work Program: a municipal outreach and education program aimed at curbing sprawl; a regional forum for first generation communities; and developing the first phase of a comprehensive regional economic development strategy.

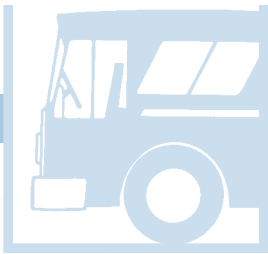
In an effort to be as inclusive as possible, DVRPC solicited input from more than

100 community groups throughout the region, posted the draft Planning Work Program on the DVRPC web page for public comment, and reviewed the document with all DVRPC committees. The approved Work Program represents a collaborative effort that seeks to address issues facing the region while furthering long range plans for orderly growth. According to Senior Regional Planner Ben Ginsberg, "The most important thing people should know about the Work Program is that it is diverse. It includes projects in a host of planning areas including transit, open space, bicycle and pedestrian issues, corridor planning, traffic counting, modeling and freight planning."



Workshop facilitator, Fran Snyder, helps Board members stay focused when prioritizing & exploring regional issues.

The \$14,687,639 budget for the FY 2002 Work Program shows an increase of \$819,928 over the FY 2001 budget. Meant to serve as a flexible document, the Work Program can and often is amended to respond to the changing needs of our diverse region. ☺



DVRPC Adopts Regional Intelligent Transportation System Plan

DVRPC is working hard to provide residents and visitors with a seamless and safe travel environment. In continuing this work, the commission has embarked on a three year project designed to fine tune the region's transportation management systems and improve how we share travel information throughout the region.

DVRPC's Board has programmed funding for Philadelphia Regional Integrated Multi-modal Information Sharing (PRIMIS) in the FY 01-04 TIP, and also added the first phase of PRIMIS to the FY 01 Work Program. The Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Coordinating Council has also been established as a formal DVRPC committee.

“The program is designed to provide the region's ITS stakeholders with avenues for sharing information on travel conditions and with tools for coordinating the deployment of ITS throughout the Delaware Valley.”

PRIMIS was developed in cooperation with the Delaware Valley ITS Technical Task Force. The program is designed to provide the region's ITS stakeholders with avenues for sharing information on travel conditions and with tools for coordinating the deployment of ITS throughout the Delaware Valley. The Task Force examined ITS coordination in other parts of the country and infused strengths from these programs into the plan for PRIMIS. Once implemented, the Delaware Valley system will serve as an information hub that will enable agencies to relay accurate and timely travel updates to the public.




Achieving this vision depends on our ability to capitalize on the efficiency offered by technology. Computers, cellular technology and the Internet have fundamentally changed the office and now they are changing the way transportation systems are managed. Intelligent Transportation Systems use an array of technologies to monitor travel conditions and transmit information. Some examples of ITS include: variable message signs; highway advisory radio; closed circuit television cameras; and emergency traffic signal pre-emptors. Currently, most agencies using ITS work independently with little or no coordination. Increasing the use of technology for interagency coordination is part of the PRIMIS concept.

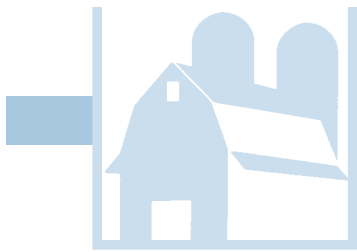
Initially, the program will center on fostering interagency cooperation among ITS stakeholders. As agency coordination increases, work will begin to increase the number of local transportation facilities and organizations covered by the I-95 Information Exchange Network. As the effort evolves, computers will make information sharing among agencies easier, and the public will benefit from up-to-the-minute information that allows them to tailor their commuting plans.



For those who want additional ITS information we suggest you request DVRPC's more detailed technical reports:

- ▲ *Define Agency Interface with the Freeway Network* (issued January, 1999)
- ▲ *Coordination White Paper* (issued November, 2000)
- ▲ *Prototype Freeway Corridor Incident Management Report: I-76/I476 Crossroads* (issued December, 2000)
- ▲ *Overview of Institutional Coordination of ITS in the Delaware Valley* (Spring, 2001)
- ▲ *Regional ITS Architecture* (Spring, 2001)
- ▲ *ITS Policies for the Delaware Valley* (Spring, 2001)

Reports are available through DVRPC's Information Services Center at 215-238-2828. 



HORIZONS 2025: HELPING THE REGION TRAVEL SMARTER

As DVRPC prepares *Horizons* Report # 4: the Preliminary Year 2025 Transportation Plan for the Delaware Valley, we recognize the progress our region's transportation system has made in recent years. But we also see the progress we have yet to make. We envision a Delaware Valley where travel is safer for walkers, bicyclists, drivers and transit users. We see a region in which environmental impact receives as much consideration as the impact of commuting time in transportation projects. We look toward a time when a variety of travel options provides greater mobility to those who are unable to drive. We plan for a transportation system that encourages economic development, maintains its infrastructure and uses incident management and technology to mitigate congestion and delays. Our vision is a transportation system that capitalizes on the existing network of streets, highways, trails and rail lines. We see all of this and more in the Delaware Valley's future. Our Preliminary Transportation Plan for the Year 2025 is the first step in making this vision a reality.

The Plan features an outline of the vision for 2025, a listing of policy initiatives, and proposed projects and studies with corresponding maps. The projects listed in the Plan come from various sources and include major projects from the current TIP that will not be completed before the Plan's adoption. The Plan features projects for corridor enhancement and service improvement, but also lists an "other" category for projects that are not easily classified, such as replacement in kind and transportation management programs. For ease of reference, the report lists projects

by the geographic areas they affect: Core Cities; First Generation Suburbs; Growing Suburbs; Rural Areas; and Regional. The Report also details the differences between clearly defined projects, conceptual projects and studies.

"We envision a Delaware Valley where travel is safer for walkers, bicyclists, drivers and transit users. We see a region in which environmental impact receives as much consideration as the impact of commuting time in transportation projects."

Last fall, DVRPC performed an initial review of the draft Plan with committees and asked for suggestions. Before the Plan is presented to the Board, DVRPC staff will conduct a conformity analysis to assess whether the emissions associated with each project fit within the constraints for the region. DVRPC will also evaluate the projects to ensure they fit within the financial constraints of the region.

We envision the DVRPC Board releasing the Preliminary Land Use and Transportation Plans to the public in March with a 30-day public comment period to follow. Public meetings will be held in March to allow the Board to adopt an Interim Plan in April – a necessary step to meet federal mandates. In the fall of 2001, a full round of public workshops will re-examine land use and transportation issues and a final plan for the Year 2025 will then be adopted.





Spotlight on Central Jersey's Future

DVRPC recently sponsored a planning charrette for The Central Jersey Transportation Forum. The Forum, comprised of numerous regional stakeholders, strives to develop a consensus for appropriate planning strategies which will address identified critical transportation issues facing Central Jersey. The specific goal of this charrette was to obtain input for preparing a "smart growth" transit/land use scenario for testing by the transportation model. The results of the testing will provide an approximation of the effect of increased opportunities for walking, bicycling, and public transit on vehicle trip reduction. Before a model can be tested, several input variables have to be determined. By conducting the charrette, regional stakeholders were given the opportunity to participate in deciding which variables and how much they were included in the process.

During break-out sessions, attendees identified potential transit services and development centers for testing by the model. The participants divided into three groups organized by geographic sub-area. Each group had several maps for reference in guiding their discussion. Based upon the discussions, each group identified transit

improvement and potential development centers for their sub-area. After the break out sessions, each group presented its findings for further discussions and gained consensus on one overall compatible transit network for the region.

It is anticipated that the model results may be ready for public presentation at a Forum meeting this Spring.



Charrette participants gather in Princeton to assess transportation priorities in Central Jersey.

Did You Know? *The term **charrette** originates from the French word for "little cart". At the Ecole de Beaux School of architecture, students were given a fixed time limit to complete projects. As the instructor rolled the "charrette" down the aisle between the drafting tables, students would work to the last possible moment, placing their presentations on the cart as it rolled past.*

This practice of designing with a sense of urgency and short deadlines has been translated into the current planning practice called the Charrette. Within the intensive Charrette schedule there is no time for procrastination. Planning, development and social issues are presented, thoroughly contemplated and resolved during this efficient and cost effective forum.

•• NJ NATURAL RESOURCES (cont. from page 2) ••

Management Area 20. The planning area runs along the Delaware River from just south of Trenton in Mercer County to Burlington City in Burlington County and moves inland to incorporate parts of Monmouth and Ocean Counties. Smaller watershed areas within Area 20 include Duck Creek, Crosswicks Creek, Blacks Creek, Crafts Creek and Assiscunk Creek. In total, the Crosswicks Creek watershed includes all or parts of 16 municipalities in Mercer, Monmouth, Burlington, and Ocean counties. The Regional Planning Partnership of Central New Jersey will collaborate with DVRPC by preparing a vision and strategies for Monmouth County communities and by assisting with land use impact analysis for the entire watershed. DVRPC expects to begin work on Area 20 in early 2001.

Information At Your Fingertips...

Under a grant from the William Penn Foundation, DVRPC is assisting area conservation organizations to expand their knowledge and use of **Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**. DVRPC recently offered free training sessions in the use of the ArcView 3.2 GIS software. The Commission has also developed an online mapping application which allows access and use of GIS mapping via the Internet with no special software required. **To test drive this new application, log on to www.dvrpc.org and click **Online Mapping**.**

• **DE River Regional Summit** (cont. from page 1) •

Panel discussion and subsequent Q & A revealed information such as shorter itineraries for excursion ferries, proposed mine reclamation to dispose of dredged spoils, and plans for a riverfront family entertainment center.

U.S. Representative **Robert Borski** (D-3rd PA) provided one of the highlights of the day in his keynote address aptly titled, The Delaware-Our Shared Legacy. He acknowledged that the first time the Delaware River was developed, mistakes were made. Industry, located along the waterfront polluted the river and then was abandoned. Congressman Borski said the Clean Water Act has played a major role in helping the river rebound. He lamented the fact that Philadelphia has lost the most population of all major cities in the U.S., but he sees the waterfront as one of the crucial ways to keep people in the city and bring them back. *For a more details about this historic conference, you may request a copy of **One Region—One River** conference highlights from Barry Seymour at 215-238-2831.*



ABOVE Summit attendees participate in a discussion on Waterfront Development and Community Revitalization.

BELOW DRBC Executive Director **Carol Collier** (left) and DRPA Chairman **Manuel Stamatakis** (right) moderate panel discussions at the regional summit.



PUBLISHED BY THE DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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DVRPC NEWS

Published by Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

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DVRPC News is funded through grants from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Pennsylvania and New Jersey departments of transportation, and DVRPC's member governments.

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Design: Marketing Design Inc.



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.