

# DVRPC NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

## DVRPC BOARD ELECTS OFFICERS FOR FY 2004

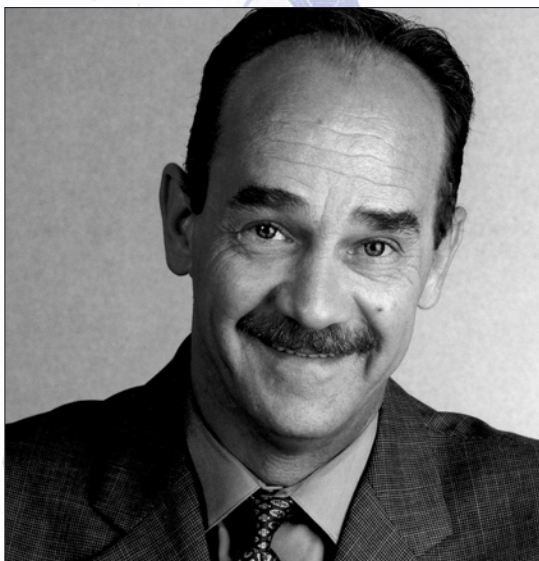
**C**amden County Freeholder **Thomas J. Gurick** has been elected Chairman of the DVRPC Board and Executive Committee for Fiscal Year 2004. The Board also elected Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Secretary **Allen D. Biehler** as Vice-Chair, Burlington County representative **Jerald R. Cureton** as Secretary, and Bucks County Commissioner **Charles H. Martin** as Treasurer. Their terms began on July 1, and will continue through June, 2004.

"I congratulate the new Board Officers on their elections, and look forward to working with such a strong and diverse team of leaders," said John J. Coscia, DVRPC Executive Director. "Each of these officers brings his own unique perspective as we develop our projects for the upcoming year, and shape our vision for the future."

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—John J. Coscia, DVRPC Executive Director

**Thomas Gurick**, who served as DVRPC Board Secretary for FY 2003, is an elected member of the Camden County Board of Chosen Freeholders. He is a professional radio personality who began his on-air career at Camden's WCAM at age 16. A third-generation Gloucester City resident, his election to the Board of



FY 2004 Board Chairman, **Thomas J. Gurick**.

Chosen Freeholders in 2000 made him the first Gloucester City resident to serve as Freeholder in forty years. In addition to his Freeholder duties, Gurick is also a member of the Camden County Planning Board and acts as Liaison to the Camden County Department of Public Works. Gurick is a graduate of Camden County College.

As Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, **Allen D. Biehler** is responsible for an organization of roughly 12,000 people with an annual budget in excess of \$5 billion. Prior to joining PennDOT in January of 2003,

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# DVRPC FUNDS \$911 MILLION IN HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS FOR REGION

The DVRPC Board authorized \$911 million in funding for major highway and public transit investments in New Jersey when they adopted a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY 2004 at their June meeting.

Every year DVRPC develops a TIP that covers the four New Jersey counties located in the DVRPC region: Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Mercer. Work has been ongoing since the fall of 2002 on this TIP update, which meets the requirements of the federal laws and regulations, including those concerning financial constraint, air quality and public participation.

The FY 2004-2006 TIP for the New Jersey portion of the DVRPC region contains nearly 200 projects totaling \$911 million for phases to be advanced during the next three years, including \$434 million on projects primarily addressing the highway system and \$477 million per year on transit projects for DRPA/PATCO and NJ TRANSIT. The New Jersey TIP averages over \$300 million per year for transportation projects.

The projects in the TIP represent the region's transportation priorities. The TIP

lists all projects that intend to use federal funds, along with all state funded projects whether or not they are regionally significant. The list is multi-modal, including highway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and freight-related projects.

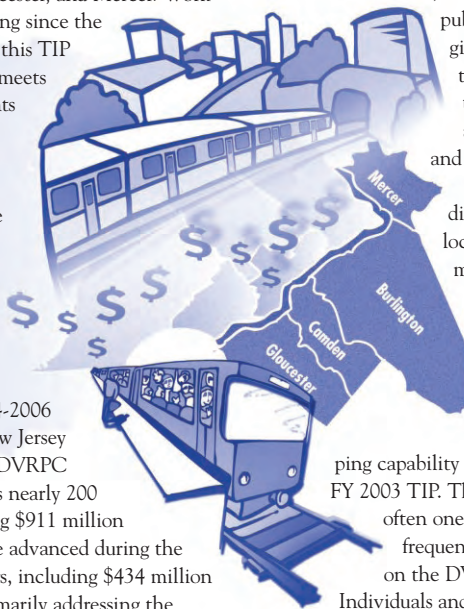
In an effort to invite extensive public involvement, DVRPC opened a 30-day public comment period that ended June 5, 2003 and held two

public meetings to give the public the opportunity to pose questions about the process and the projects. TIP documents were distributed to many local libraries and made available on DVRPC's website at [www.dvrpc.org](http://www.dvrpc.org).

The site includes a TIP search feature and an interactive map-

ping capability for the current FY 2003 TIP. The TIP page is often one of the most frequently hit pages on the DVRPC website.

Individuals and organizations were also able to provide written comments on the TIP via regular mail, e-mail, and fax. Comments were received from individuals, member counties, operating agencies and the Regional Citizens Committee of DVRPC.



## TEMPLE UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL PLANNING TO OFFER GRADUATE DEGREE AT HARRISBURG CAMPUS

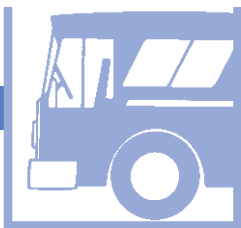


In Fall 2002, Temple University Ambler began offering new graduate and undergraduate degree programs in Community and Regional Planning (CRP) to meet needs expressed by planners and government officials throughout the state. In just one year, the master's degree program is thriving with 45 students from all walks of life.

Building on the success of the Ambler campus program, the University is planning to offer the master's degree at Temple's Harrisburg campus in Fall 2004 upon sufficient enrollment. Courses will be offered in the evening and students will be able to complete the program entirely at Harrisburg on a part-time basis. Harrisburg students also have the option of enrolling in additional elective courses offered at the Ambler campus.

For more information on the Master of Science in Community and Regional Planning at Temple University Harrisburg and Temple University Ambler, visit [www.ambler.temple.edu/crp](http://www.ambler.temple.edu/crp).

For admissions information and program requirements, call 215-283-1251 or 215-283-1286.



## LINKING TRANSIT AND COMMUNITIES DVRPC PUBLISHES STUDY OF SITES FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

The Delaware Valley's extensive transit network—the fifth largest in the nation—is one of the region's great assets.

While the region has over 340 fixed-rail stations, the majority of them have not developed the area that surrounds them to best meet the needs of transit riders.

To assist these areas in fully capitalizing on their proximity to rail stations, DVRPC has developed a three-volume study: *Linking Transit, Communities and Development: Regional Inventory of Transit-Oriented Development Study*. The first volume, published in August 2003, addresses the benefits and barriers of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

***“Transit-oriented development encourages intensified, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development surrounding transit stations to encourage transit ridership.”***

and recommendations for funding and implementation in the region. The second, scheduled for publication in October 2003, profiles 45 stations throughout the Delaware Valley. The third installment, which will provide in-depth suggestions for development around five select stations, is set for completion in Fall 2004.

Transit-oriented development encourages intensified, mixed-use, pedestrian-

friendly development surrounding transit stations, which is intended to encourage transit ridership. While automobiles are accommodated, bicycle and pedestrian paths are given equal importance to encourage multi-modal access. The goal of this study was to inventory the region's rail stations to determine a priority list of “Opportunity Sites” for future TOD planning.

Well-designed TOD offers many benefits for the region. It allows commuters to access multiple destinations in one trip, such as picking up dry-cleaning or groceries on the way home from work. It can increase transit ridership, thereby making the transit system more viable and reducing congestion on the highways. Since TOD is compact

*(cont. on page 6)*

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CERTIFIES THAT DVRPC IS ONE OF TOP MPO'S IN COUNTRY

DVRPC has earned a reputation for inclusive and extensive public involvement, as well as innovative programs, throughout its almost 40 years as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the southeastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey area. That reputation isn't based just upon word of mouth. It is earned through vigilance, determination and continuous examination of our projects by staff, the DVRPC Board and the federal government.

Each year, DVRPC is responsible for self-certifying that all federal requirements are being met. In addition, the Commission is evaluated every three years by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal

Transit Administration to determine that DVRPC meets all of the federal transportation planning requirements including:

- ▼ ***Adopting a long-range transportation plan for the region;***
- ▼ ***Preparing a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Delaware Valley;***
- ▼ ***Cultivating a Planning Work Program that meets the demands of our member governments and the region; and***
- ▼ ***Providing a means of disseminating information to all citizens and devising a process for receiving feedback and providing a timely response.***

We are happy to announce that DVRPC's latest federal certification review, which was conducted on-site throughout

two days in February, 2003, has produced an unqualified endorsement of our procedures and was found to be “within the spirit and intent of metropolitan planning laws and regulations.”

***“We are happy to announce that DVRPC's latest federal certification review was found to be ‘within the spirit and intent of metropolitan planning laws and regulations.’”***

The New Jersey and Pennsylvania departments of transportation, the region's public transit agencies, DVRPC Board members, staff and citizens provided input to this successful endeavor. 🌀





# EIGHTH OZONE ACTION SEASON COMES TO A CLOSE

This summer's unseasonably cool, rainy weather may have thwarted its share of picnics, but it created an ideal climate for the region's air quality. The eighth year of DVRPC's Ozone Action program saw only four Ozone Action days and seven Ozone Health Watch (code Orange) days—a vast improvement from last year's record-breaking 15 Ozone Action days and 21 Ozone Health Watch days.

Administered by DVRPC, the Ozone Action program provides a daily ozone forecast and alerts the public when air quality levels are unhealthy. The initiative encourages use of public transportation and ride-sharing to help reduce ozone-forming emissions, and educates the public about the dangers of ground-level ozone. Most people are unaware that ground-level ozone, an odorless, colorless gas, can cause serious health problems, especially if they are part of a sensitive population group, such children, the elderly, and those with existing respiratory ailments.

***“The initiative encourages the use of public transportation and ride-sharing to help reduce ozone-forming emissions, and educates the public about the dangers of ground-level ozone.”***

The 2003 Season marked several changes in the program. For the first time, Ozone Health Watch notices were issued for sensitive groups when ozone levels were forecast to reach

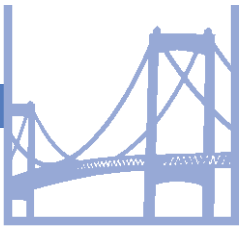


“Code Orange” levels. The forecasting method also changed, and is now consistent with the EPA's Air Quality Index.

The Ozone Action Partnership increased educational tactics this summer to raise the region's awareness. Brochures and promotional items were distributed at a variety of community and regional events, from Temple University's Earth Day to Unity Day on the Parkway. The Partnership also spread the word through a sponsorship at the Tweeter Center, which included advertising at the Center, as well as an informational table at events throughout the summer.

Additionally, the Partnership made a special effort this season to reach the Spanish-speaking community. Forecasts were given in English and Spanish, the Ozone Action brochure was translated, and ads appeared in the Spanish-language newspaper *Al Dia*.





# DVRPC DEVELOPS “WHAT-IF” SCENARIOS FOR THE REGION

**W**ill sprawl increase? Will the regional economy strengthen? Will the region's population shrink or expand? Will funding for infrastructure increase or decrease?

To help prepare for the development of the region's Year 2030 Long-Range Plan, DVRPC investigated potential “what-if” scenarios with transportation impacts. These scenarios are analyzed in detail in DVRPC's recent report, *Regional Analysis of What-If Scenarios*.

The study addressed a range of potential regional, national and global changes that should be considered in the development of the 2030 Plan. Such scenario-based planning techniques have been used across the country to dynamically assess future alternatives. The DVRPC study was completed in two phases: Phase I investigated a set of twelve scenarios, while Phase II chose five scenarios for further in-depth analysis.

**“The study addressed a range of potential regional, national and global changes that should be considered in the development of the 2030 Plan”**

The original set of twelve scenarios was based on input and guidance from DVRPC's Board Policy Analysis Committee. The five Phase II scenarios were chosen to create a balanced overview of possible outcomes (both positive and negative), with consideration of their

likelihood to occur. The five scenarios chosen for in-depth analysis were:

- ▼ **Increased Out-Migration, or regional population loss**
- ▼ **Sprawl Expands**
- ▼ **Accelerated In-Migration, or regional population growth**
- ▼ **DVRPC's Year 2025 Plan is realized**
- ▼ **Recentralization of the Region's Population (back to urban centers) occurs.**

The report summarizes the results of this analysis, and makes broad policy recommendations. Recommendations include emphasizing education and promotion of the long-range plan development efforts; partnership and cooperation among involved entities and stakeholders; incremental implementation of the future plans by prioritized Transportation Improvement Program [TIP] projects; and development of a long-range plan linking economic development, land use and transportation.

The study does not make any scenario recommendations and is open-ended by design. While data and analysis results are compiled for easy comparison among assessed scenarios, the decision to choose the region's future is left to the residents of the DVRPC's nine-county planning area. In recognition of this, DVRPC offers the study as a guide for citizens to understand alternatives available to the region, and not as a final authoritative statement. In a multi-year planning process to create a vision for 2030, DVRPC has begun to incorporate extensive public outreach and citizen involvement efforts above and beyond federal regulations for Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The scenario results are provided as a launch pad to assist the citizens of the Delaware Valley as they develop their vision for 2030.



♦♦ OFFICERS FOR FY2004... (cont. from page 1) ♦♦

Biehler had 34 years of experience in transportation engineering, planning, construction administration and public transportation management in Pittsburgh. Biehler holds a degree in civil engineering from the University of Pittsburgh, as well as a master's equivalent certificate in transportation from Yale University. He is a certified Professional Engineer.

**Jerald Cureton** is a founding partner and President of Cureton Caplan, P.C., where he specializes in commercial litigation and chairs the firm's employment law department. He is a graduate of Temple University and the Marshall-Wythe School of Law at the College of William and Mary. Cureton is a member of the New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Florida and American Bar Associations, as well as the Burlington County and Camden County

Bar Associations. Cureton served as Vice Chair and Chairman of DVRPC's Board in the past.

**Charles Martin**, a Bucks County Commissioner since 1995, served as Chairman of the DVRPC Board for FY 2003. Martin draws from 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. A graduate of Lebanon Valley College, Martin served 12 years as a local elected township official establishing policy, developing budget and responding to constituents. In his two terms on the Bucks County Board of Commissioners, he has served as Chairman of the Board four times.

♦♦ LINKING TRANSIT... (cont. from page 4) ♦♦

development, it can minimize the need for future road and sewer expansions.

DVRPC's report profiles stations in each of the nine counties in the Delaware Valley, tracking factors that contribute to the success of TOD such as: zoning, available parking, bike storage, vehicular and pedestrian access, patron amenities, current ridership, connecting bus or transit service, and the current prevailing land use surrounding the station, among other factors. Over the next year, planners will focus on five promising stations—Girard Avenue, Lansdale, Thorndale, West Trenton, and Woodbury—and offer detailed recommendations for TOD in the surrounding neighborhoods.



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Delaware County	Gloucester County
Montgomery County	Mercer County
City of Chester	City of Camden
City of Philadelphia	City of Trenton

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John J. Coscia, Executive Director	

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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.

FALL 2003