



RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT FOR MULTI-REGIONAL PLAN TO REDUCE IMPACTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

*Collaborative plan brings together
26 cities, towns, and counties of Central Virginia*

Richmond, VA – The joint Hazard Mitigation Technical Advisory Committee (HMTAC) for the Richmond and Crater regions seeks public comment on the draft update of the *Richmond-Crater Multi-Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan*.

The 26 localities of the Richmond and Crater regions maintain the plan to collaboratively identify vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters and develop long-term strategies to reduce or eliminate long-term risks. The draft plan is available on the project website at www.richmondregional.org/HMP. Public comments will be received until 4:30 p.m. on March 24, 2017.

Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the potential impact of future disasters. The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires local governments to adopt and update hazard mitigation plans as a precondition for receiving certain non-emergency disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Local governments may elect to develop their own mitigation plan or participate in a multi-jurisdictional mitigation plan. Since 2003, the Commonwealth of Virginia has encouraged its 21 regional planning districts to lead the development of regional hazard mitigation plans.

The 26 localities of the Richmond and Crater regions created the *Richmond-Crater Multi-Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* in 2011 by combining and updating the regions' individual plans adopted in 2006. The 2017 update will fulfill the federal requirement for updating local hazard mitigation plans as a precondition for receiving certain non-emergency disaster assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

This multi-regional planning project is managed by staff from the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) and Crater Planning District Commission (CPDC), with contracted assistance from Dewberry Consulting. The effort is guided by the HMTAC, which consists of emergency

management staff from each of the 26 localities as appointed by each jurisdiction's chief administrative official.

In December, the HMTAC hosted three public meetings to inform the public about and obtain input on the plan. On February 17, 2017, the draft 2017 update of the plan was submitted to the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) who will review the plan for compliance with state and federal requirements before forwarding the plan to FEMA for review. After these reviews, the project staff will incorporate changes requested by the reviewing agencies, as well as any input from the public. Each of the local governments will consider the plan for re-adoption during the spring of 2017 following the incorporation of public input received and any changes required by VDEM or FEMA. During the local adoption process citizens will have a final opportunity to provide comment on the plan.

While nothing can be done to prevent natural hazard events from occurring, the plan prepares the region to minimize the disruption and devastation that so often accompanies disasters. Through this plan, the localities will maintain eligibility for federal grant programs that support emergency warning systems, critical utility hardening, acquisition of flood-prone homes, elevation of flood-prone buildings, and outreach programs.

Complete details on the multi-regional project, including a PDF of the draft update to the plan and appendix can be found on the project website at www.richmondregional.org/HMP. Public comments may be submitted to the project manager Jackie Stewart until 4:30 p.m. on March 24, 2017 by way of phone, e-mail, or mail as noted below.

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The Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and Crater Planning District Commission are intergovernmental agencies that facilitate collaboration among the local jurisdictions in their respective regions. The RRPDC includes nine localities in central Virginia – the Town of Ashland, the City of Richmond, and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan. The CPDC includes 11 localities south central Virginia – the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell and Petersburg, and the counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry and Sussex.