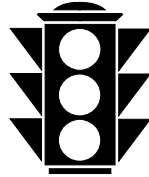


**PIEDMONT REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION STRATEGY**



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In Cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation

**Federal Highway Administration
and the
Virginia Department of Transportation**

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INTRODUCTION

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The Piedmont Planning District is comprised of seven counties in South Central Virginia. The Counties include Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway, and Prince Edward (**Exhibit 1**). The Piedmont Planning District's (PD 14) 1997 population is estimated to be about 90,000 or 1.4% of the state's population. The land area of PD 14 is comprised of 2,810 square miles. The Piedmont Planning District has a low population density of 30.25 persons per square mile. (**Exhibit 6**)

The households in Planning District 14 have household incomes below those statewide. The median household income for PD 14 is \$22,071 compared to \$33,328 statewide. Furthermore, according to the 1990 Census, 17.7% of the population lives below the poverty level compared to 10.2% statewide. Unemployment for this area is higher when compared to the state 2.8% vs 3.3% in 1999 (**Exhibit 2**).

Planning District 14 has a 1997 estimated population of 91,400 and approximately 51,000 (60%) are of working age (16 - 64 years) and 12,750 (15%) are over the age of 65. Education levels in the region are relatively low with only 15% of the persons over 25 having completed college, 55% of the persons completing high school, and 24% have less than a ninth grade education. The average person must commute to work in the major hubs which are located in surrounding areas such as Lynchburg, Richmond or Charlottesville to find employment which pays a competitive wage. According to the 1990 US Census, every county in the Planning District has more out-commuters than in-commuters except Nottoway and Prince Edward. Cumberland County had the largest percentage (70.1%) of its total 3,596 workers commuting outside of the County for employment in the District. Charlotte County had the largest percentage (1.7%) of its total 5,129 workforce commuting outside of the State or employment. This can be attributed to the County's close proximity to the North Carolina border.

BACKGROUND

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, now known as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21ST Century (TEA 21) of 1998, has made it possible for the rural localities of the Piedmont Planning District to develop a regional transportation planning program. Through funding made available from the State of Virginia, the Piedmont Planning District Commission (PPDC) will continue to participate in a statewide program to help the rural localities with their transportation programs and needs. The Piedmont Planning District Commission has begun identifying areas of concern through the appointment of a Transportation Task Force and transportation network. **Exhibit 3** outlines the organizational structure of the PPDC program. The next phase of the program includes the identification of the region's needs and recommendations. This report will concentrate on addressing those needs in an organized fashion.

CHAPTER I

INVENTORY OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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HIGHWAYS AND ROADS

The Piedmont Planning District is located in two State Highway Districts (**Exhibit 4**). The Counties of Amelia, Nottoway, and Lunenburg are located in the Richmond District. The Counties of Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, and Prince Edward are located in the Lynchburg District. Therefore, the region's highway transportation plan will need to be coordinated with two districts.

Planning District 14 is served by U.S. Highways 360, 460, 15, and 60. **Exhibit 1** depicts the region and provides the location and routing of the forementioned highways and primary state routes. There are no interstates within the district. The lack of direct interstate highway access is the most obvious impediment to regional competitiveness of the Piedmont Planning District. This deficiency applies to all of the region's growth centers, including Blackstone, Crewe-Burkeville, Farmville, and Kenbridge-Victoria and all other communities within the region. The nearest interstate access is by I-85 as it passes to the south-east of the Piedmont Planning District near Lunenburg County.

Within Planning District 14, a significant portion of the region's roads are classified as unpaved roads. The Virginia Department of Transportation classifies unpaved roads into three categories: all weather surface, light surface, and unsurfaced. For the purposes of this report, all three classifications will be combined into unpaved roads category. The following chart depicts the counties in Planning District 14 and the road mileage for each.

| COUNTY | HARD SURFACE | UNPAVED | % UNPAVED | TOTAL ROAD MILES |
|---------------|--------------|---------|-----------|------------------|
| Buckingham | 352.46 | 214.35 | 38% | 566.81 |
| Lunenburg | 317.28 | 186.15 | 37% | 503.43 |
| Charlotte | 362.68 | 114.70 | 24% | 477.38 |
| Prince Edward | 292.47 | 109.49 | 27% | 401.96 |
| Amelia | 282.47 | 74.76 | 21% | 357.23 |
| Nottoway | 256.57 | 44.04 | 15% | 300.61 |
| Cumberland | 183.21 | 111.55 | 38% | 294.76 |
| TOTAL | 2,047.14 | 855.04 | 29% | 2,902.18 |

SOURCE: Department of Transportation General Highway Maps, roads correct to July 1, 1999

The unpaved roads primarily serve private residences, however there are several businesses which are located on unpaved roads also. The region's economy tends to be negatively affected by the existence of unpaved roads. The real estate values of the area are adversely affected when access to an area is limited. Finally, potential industries may be deterred from investing in the community if the localities' infrastructure is of poor quality. Unpaved roads also present a maintenance problem for localities and the state. The unpaved roads are especially susceptible to erosion and inclement weather. The gravel surface is washed away by rain and leaves the road bed exposed. Thus, the result of the erosion causes "pot holes" and other damages to the road bed.

The District has one (1) "Park and Ride Lot" which is located in Amelia County on Route 360 and Route 698 (Circle Drive). The lot has surface treatment with lighting and 50 spaces. This lot is owned and maintained by VDOT. Approximately 16 vehicles are parked in this lot on any given day.

STREETS

As mentioned in the aforementioned paragraph, the highways and streets of Planning District 14 are located in two statewide highway districts. Therefore, all the streets located in the Planning District must be incorporated into their respective district's *2010 Statewide Highway Plan*.

The Statewide Highway Plans are designed to identify specific needs and prioritized these needs

for funding purposes. The plans include a summary of the needs in the counties and towns located in the district. In Planning District 14, the Towns of Farmville and Blackstone have developed their own developmental needs through the year 2010. Both of the localities maintain their own streets within their jurisdiction. Both Towns are currently updating their “Small Urban Area Transportation Plans” for 2020.

The other towns in the district must fall under the broad umbrella of the district plan. Therefore, the streets in this area must meet the established criteria for the entire district and compete with areas which may be outside of Planning District 14.

RAILROADS

Rail service for freight and passengers has been important to the economic history of the Piedmont Planning District. Communities such as Crewe and Victoria owe much of their existence to the presence of the railroad. However, over the past decade, the Piedmont Planning District Commission has seen a decline in the service to the region by railroad carriers. Abandonment of rail beds has been commonplace throughout the region. Within the Planning District, the counties of Buckingham, Lunenburg, and Cumberland are not a part of the overall service plan of the through railroads. Buckingham County is served by the Buckingham Branch Railroad which is locally owned and operated. Lunenburg, once a hub for the Norfolk and Western, has seen its lines abandoned and the railroad leave the County. Cumberland simply is not served by the rail industry. While some rail and freight service is available (e.g. Buckingham Branch and Chambers Landfill bulk head), rail freight has been greatly reduced in recent years throughout the region. This trend creates a handicap for some existing industries and represents a barrier to the recruitment of new industry to the region.

The largest railroad service provider in the Planning District is Norfolk Southern. Norfolk Southern is the result of a merger between the Norfolk Western and the Southern Railroads. Since the merger, a downsizing of the regions railroad operations has occurred. However, the Town of Crewe located in Nottoway County is the home for the Virginia Division Headquarters.

The railroads are used for carrying freight and other products. Recently, a railroad bulk head was opened in Amelia County to serve the Chambers Landfill. Passenger train service to the area ceased to exist in the early 1980's.

Rail service has been a vital part of the region's economy in the past and will continue to remain an intricate part as the region begins to progress into the future (**Exhibit 5**).

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Piedmont Planning District is not serviced by a public transportation system on District-wide basis. Currently, five (5) public systems exist which offer services to limited service areas. The five (5) systems are the Farmville Area Bus (FAB), Central Virginia Transportation (CVT), Town and County Bus System, Crossroads Services and STEPS, Inc.

The Farmville Area Bus (FAB) is an independent department within the Town of Farmville. The Farmville Area Bus provides a fixed route transit service within the corporate limits and commuter bus type service from the corporate limits to the Town of Keysville to the Southside Virginia Community College. The bus makes six (6) stops along Route 15 South and two (2) in the Keysville area. The Farmville Area Bus offers two fixed routes with services provided continuously. A demand response van service is also available for ADA/paratransit riders. The Town owns six (6) buses and three (3) vans. Funding for FAB is provided by financial contributions from the Town of Farmville, Longwood College, Southside Virginia Community College in Keysville, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration.

Central Virginia Transportation is a deviated-fixed route transit system operating in certain localities of the Planning District. The Counties of Amelia, Buckingham, and Cumberland contain the origination points for CVT buses. Limited service is offered to the Counties of Nottoway and Prince Edward. Central Virginia Transportation operates nine (9) passenger buses with 10 to 24 seat capacity, two (2) mini-vans and two (2) passenger vans. Most of these vehicles are equipped to handle persons of various disabilities. Central Virginia Transportation is equipped, to provide, for medical transportation upon request. Funding for the CVT system is provided by State and Federal funds which are matched by local funds.

In 1998 the Town of Victoria applied for and was awarded grant monies for an experimental/demonstration pilot program. These funds were obtained through the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation to start up a public transit system. This system operates as a deviated-fixed route and is an extension of the Central Virginia Transit System and serves the Towns of Victoria and Kenbridge and the Lunenburg Courthouse area.

Crossroads Services and STEPS, Inc. located in Farmville also provide limited transportation for their clients and employees. Both Crossroads and STEPS serve individuals with physical and mental disabilities.

Collectively, these public bus systems provide important transportation services for many of the region's poor, disabled and mentally ill. These services provide basic mobility to the region's most economically disadvantaged individuals opening up basic access to services, medical care, and shopping. However, looking at the region as a whole, public transportation services are extremely limited with vast areas and many communities not served by public transportation. Public transportation within the district is not practically available to provide workers with transportation to and from work places. The lack of this service is a serious obstacle to many individuals seeking gainful employment who are poor, can not afford reliable personal transportation.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

The Piedmont Planning District is served by five (5) public general aviation airports (**Exhibit 1**). Air freight and passenger service is not presently available at any of the local airports. These airports are located in Farmville, Crewe, Blackstone, Lunenburg and Amelia. The Farmville Municipal Airport and the Blackstone Allen C. Perkinson Municipal airfield are listed as general aviation airports. The Crewe Municipal, Hilltop and Lunenburg County Airports are local service airports. Each airport has had an impact on its respective locality's economy.

The Town of Blackstone is served by the Allan C. Perkinson Municipal Airport is a joint use airport of the Town of Blackstone and Fort Pickett Army Reservation. Currently the airport has two runways, 4-22 and 1-19. Runway 1-19 is often closed for state and county police and prison correction officers driver's training. A runway renovation project was funded in 1992 and work was completed on the runway in 1995. The airport is still used by the military in support of training operations at Fort Pickett. Negotiations are underway for the airport to be transferred by public benefit conveyance.

The Crewe Airport is located 3/4 mile east of the Town of Crewe. The main commercial user of the Crewe Airport is the Wilkerson Tire Company which utilizes the airport for shipping and receiving purposes. The Town of Crewe has been successful in obtaining funds from the federal and State Aviation Associations for the upgrade of the airports facilities. The upgrades include the installation of a new lighting system, terminal building, and fuel servicing area.

The Farmville Regional Airport is located in Cumberland County 4 miles northwest of the Town of Farmville. The Farmville Regional Airport is the busiest airport in the region. Estimated economic impact on the locality is in excess of \$700,000 and 15 jobs. During 1992, the 3,200 foot paved lighted runway was widened, a new lighting system was installed on the runway, and a new overlay for the surface of the runway was done. In early 1993, it was announced that a \$1.17 million runway expansion project was going to begin in mid - 1993. Funded by partial grant monies the project increased the length of the runway by 3,200 to 4,400 feet and added a 3,000 foot parallel taxi-way. This work was completed in 1997. In 1995 a new terminal building was built and construction of a new fuel tank system was installed.

Hilltop Airport located in Amelia County has a grass runway. This airport is listed as the 58th busiest airport in the Commonwealth according to the 1990 Virginia Air Transportation System Plan. The airport's design role is listed as basic utility.

The Lunenburg County Airport is located off of State Route 40 between the Town of Kenbridge and Victoria in Lunenburg County. This airport facility is listed as basic utility and is the 68th busiest airport in the Commonwealth according to the 1990 Virginia Air Transportation System Plan.

The following chart depicts basic data for the five (5) public general aviation airports located in the District:

| AIRPORT | LONGEST RUNWAY FEET | TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT \$ | BASED AIRCRAFT AND RANK | 1993 OPERAT. FORECAST RANK | DESIGN ROLE |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| Blackstone RWY 1-19 RWY 4-22 | 4,000 4,632 | 397,000 | 6/33of75 | 6,109/57 | Basic Ut. |
| Crewe RWY 15-33 | 3,300 | 575,00 | 8/51of75 | 7,083/52 | Basic Ut. |
| Farmville RWY 03-21 | 4,400 | 700,000 | 15/41of75 | 10,978/39 | Basic Ut. |
| Amelia/Hilltop | 2,200 | 207,000 | 5/61of75 | 4,648/58 | Basic Ut. |
| Lunenburg RWY 02-20 | 3,000 | 268,000 | 2/66of 75 | 3,673/68 | Basic Ut. |
| <i>SOURCE: Virginia Air Transportation System Plan Update Volume 2, June 1990</i> | | | | | |

FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION

The Piedmont Planning District is served by several independent and company freight providers. As mentioned previously the region is served by the U.S. Highways and State Primary routes. These routes make it possible for localities to be served and goods to be delivered into or shipped out of localities. Parcel carriers which are a common sight in the Planning District include UPS, Federal Express, RPS, Emery, BAX (Burlington Air Express), which also moves air cargo. Lighter than Load (LTL) carriers commonly used within the District include: Roadway, Estes, Wilson, Hatcher, Yellow, Overnight Trucking, JEVIC, R&L and CSE (Conway Southern Express).

Currently, tractor trailers have unlimited access to all localities except Lunenburg County. In Lunenburg County, carrier must obtain special permits when traveling into and through the County. Many industries in the County who depend on trucking to enhance their operation have continuously expressed concern over this requirement.

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION CONSUMERS

Persons with disabilities, the elderly, students, and families all depend on some form of transportation to get from one place to another. The rural nature of the Planning District is a factor which hinders the ability of the localities to provide transportation service for persons with special needs.

Currently, the Central Virginia Transportation System operates in the region as described elsewhere in this report. The coverage of this system is very limited and therefore the services offered can not be adequately dispersed to the entire population. This problem affects persons with disabilities, commuters, students, and senior citizens. STEPS, Inc. and Crossroads provides transportation for their clients/employees.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

The concept of telecommuting is beginning to emerge as a potential alternative to traditional job related communication within the Planning District. Given the technological innovations and the popularity of the computer, telecommunications could prove to be a major economic opportunity for those workers within the Planning District who have the training, technical knowledge and desire to pursue that opportunity.

Currently, applications involving telecommunications involve the use of technology in providing educational opportunities, securing orders via computer modems, banking, and teleconferencing. Telecommunications is proving to be a very cost effective way of commuting in all areas of operation. Although cost effective once implemented, the expense to develop the system is cost prohibitive for most small operations.

Modern telecommunications fiber optic infrastructure is available within most communities within the region. However, due to the lack of a critical mass in population and business demand, some telecommunications services such as Internet access is not as conveniently or as economically available as in most urban areas.

OTHER (BIKE, WATERWAYS, PEDESTRIAN)

One thing that the Piedmont Planning District has is an abundance of scenic natural environment including rivers, streams and forests. These resources offer great potential for the development of special transportation facilities including bikeways, pedestrian paths and boat ramps. The Planning District has a bike route which stretches through Amelia County, Lunenburg County, and Nottoway County on U.S. Interstate Bicycle Route 1. The planning district has the potential to become an effective player in tourism and transportation once goals are developed and

implemented. The District has a driving tour, “Lee’s Retreat” which has become a significant tourist attraction. **(Exhibit 7)** All seven (7) of the district counties are participating in a regional bicycle plan funded in part by a special rural transportation planning grant. While bicycle transportation is only a small component of the total transportation issue, many communities across America are finding that the development of appropriate community bicycle facilities are good investments and provide significant benefits for their citizens. In addition to community quality of life and recreational benefits, well planned bicycle routes and ancillary facilities have been shown to be beneficial to local and regional tourism industries. Collectively, these benefits translate directly to enhanced community economic viability. VDOT recognizes the implications of a well planned bicycle facilities system for Virginia’s communities and is currently seeking to develop a state-wide bicycle plan. This regional plan will become part of that state-wide plan.

CHAPTER II

STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS: FACTORS

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STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS: FACTORS:

All States are required to undertake a State-wide Transportation Planning process and to develop a State-wide Transportation Plan. At a minimum, each State shall consider seven (7) specific factors in the preparation of the State-wide Transportation plan. The following is a summary of the seven (7) factors as they relate to the transportation needs of the Piedmont Planning District.

FACTOR 1: SUPPORT THE ECONOMIC VITALITY OF THE RURAL METRO/AREA

The Piedmont Planning District includes no areas covered by a Metropolitan Area Plan. This factor is not relevant to the District's transportation planning process except as it may relate to the larger substate regional impacts. The nature of the Piedmont Planning District is entirely rural.

All territories of the Piedmont Planning District are outside of Metropolitan Planning Areas of the Commonwealth. Accordingly, the Piedmont Planning District Commission's transportation planning program is designed specifically and exclusively to address the transportation needs of the entire region. This process includes elements of citizen participation, technical input, political input, and special consumer group input. This process has been in place since July 1, 1993 and has been on-going in order to ensure that the interests of the District are fairly and thoroughly represented in the Virginia State-wide Transportation Planning Process.

The tourism potential of the Piedmont Planning District is significant but largely underdeveloped. It is expected that the region will be initiating renewed efforts to better develop the region's tourism potential in the coming years. Some of this potential will relate to scenic and historic byway developments.

The Piedmont Planning District is economically underdeveloped as measured by low income achievement and high unemployment, underemployment and poverty. Accordingly, it is expected that the Piedmont Planning District Commission will pay prominent attention to the issue of State investment strategies supportive of rural economic growth and tourism development in any future regional transportation plan.

FACTOR 2: INCREASE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR MOTORIZED AND NON-MOTORIZED USERS

Bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities have a particular appeal in rural and economically underdeveloped areas as they provide the citizens with relatively low cost transportation options in areas where they are practically feasible. Obviously such modes of transportation are severely limited as modes of transportation to more significant numbers of persons over long distances. However, within the district's larger communities and employment centers, there may be a number of practical and affordable bicycle and pedestrian facility opportunities which, if developed, could help to move significant numbers of persons to and from employment, shopping and services opportunities.

Additionally, in rural sparsely populated areas, there may be additional opportunities to develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities, in support of recreational areas or tourism activities. Boating and horseback riding are two more recreation related transportation modes which might have good applications in the region.

For the purpose of the regional transportation needs assessment, it is expected that bicycle and pedestrian facilities have many potentially viable applications within the region, particularly in the more densely populated areas. The Commission has completed a regional Bicycle Plan which identifies some of the specific bicycle facility opportunities within the district.

FACTOR 3: INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY AND MOBILITY OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO PEOPLE AND FREIGHT

While there are a number of locations within the district that experience regular or periodic traffic congestion problems, the District as a whole is very rural and traffic congestion is not generally perceived as a priority problem. In fact, the opposite circumstances of physical isolation is a far greater problem contributing to extreme difficulty in efficiently delivering a wide range of normal public services. Also physical isolation contributes to slow economic growth and a relatively low rate of labor market participation in the region. Accordingly, while some limited consideration of traffic congestion may be given, it will not be a major priority of any future Piedmont Planning District Regional Transportation Plan.

Preliminary examination of the regional transportation needs has identified physical isolation and transportation barriers as a major contributing source of economic underdevelopment and a myriad of social problems. Five (5) public transit services do exist within the district (the Farmville Area Bus, Central Virginia Transportation, Town and County Transit, Crossroads Services and STEPS, Inc.) but are very limited due to cost and service density factors. The need to expand these services has been identified by the Transportation Technical Committee. Nonetheless, it is expected that there will be renewed focus on transit needs within the District to identify appropriate and cost effective transit opportunities that will help provide better access to

employment opportunities as well as to basic community services (eg. education, health care, shopping).

The Piedmont Planning District is not located in proximity to any international border crossing, therefore, this factor is not relevant to the regional transportation needs assessment.

The Piedmont Planning District is not located in proximity to any sea port or inland port, but does potentially have access to the various facilities at the Port of Hampton Roads, and the Virginia Inland Port located at Front Royal. Access to these facilities is dependent principally on surface transportation including rail and highways. For the purpose of this regional transportation needs assessment, it is generally concluded that the region's relative isolation, combined with various deficiencies in the surface transportation facilities, seriously impedes practical access to the various port facilities in Virginia. While nothing can be done about the region's location, much can be done in the future to improve surface transportation facilities connecting the region to the Virginia port facilities. In this regard, surface transportation facilities improvements are needed both within the boundaries of the region and beyond the boundaries of the region.

Within the Piedmont Planning District, there are no airport facilities providing commercial passenger or freight services. Both commercial passenger and freight services are available at Richmond, Charlottesville and Lynchburg. Access to these services is by surface highway transportation, with forty to ninety minutes travel time for all areas within the district. Within the Piedmont Planning District, there are four (4) publicly operated general aviation airports (Amelia, Farmville, Crewe and Lunenburg) and one (1) joint military and civilian airport (Blackstone). These airport facilities are important transportation assets for the region, particularly important to serve the needs of commerce, institutional organizations and government. It is expected that these facilities will offer many opportunities for further development in the future.

Within the Piedmont Planning District there are no intermodal transportation facilities per se. However, there are a number of interfaces between modes of transportation which could benefit from improvements, eg. access roads to airports. In the coming program year, those interfaces between modes of transportation will be further examined in order to develop where possible greater functional efficiency. There is a need to improve roads and bridges providing access to the Farmville Regional Airport.

The Piedmont Planning District has no specifically identified major freight routes. However, the district does have rail and four lane divided highway access to several of its communities and these facilities are important local freight corridors within the District connecting local commerce with the Commonwealth, the nation and the world beyond. Because of the critical importance of promoting economic growth in the District, it is expected that freight movement within the District will be an important issue for further examination in the coming year.

There are no National Parks within the Piedmont Planning District, but there are five (5) State

Forest/Parks within the District. They are 1) Buckingham/Appomattox State Forest including Holiday Lake State Park, 2) Cumberland State Forest including Bear Creek Lake State Park, 3) Gallion State Forest including Twin Lakes State Park 4) Sailor's Creek Battlefield Historical Park located in Amelia County and 5) the James River State Park located in Buckingham County. All of these State Forest/Parks are important recreation facilities enjoyed by both local residents and non-local visitors. Generally transportation access to these facilities is good. However, basic access can be improved as well as internal transportation modes including park roads, parking facilities, walking trails, bike trails, and boating facilities. These opportunities will be further explored in the next program year.

The Piedmont Planning District contains numerous historic sites both publically and privately owned. Several sites are significant and generate considerable public interest and visitation. Periodically transportation access to special events at historic sites are problematic. These circumstances should be studied in order to come up with better ways to relieve traffic problems and to improve overall access to important historic sites. Furthermore, within the District there are several transportation facilities which are themselves, historically significant including several train stations, a major railroad bridge (High Bridge), some early American commerce canals, and some old road beds dating from early days of settlement. These facilities should be thoroughly inventoried and evaluated to ensure effective protection and preservation in the future.

The Piedmont Planning District contains one military facility, Fort Pickett which realigned in 1997. In December, 1997, it was announced that the Governor had included in his 1998-2000 biennial budget funds for the relocation of the Headquarters of the Department of Military Affairs to Fort Pickett. The Department of Military Affairs, the State agency that oversees the operation of the Virginia National Guard is located in Richmond. In February, 1998, a \$1.4 million contract was awarded to renovate a building at Fort Pickett that has become the new home of the Department of Military Affairs. The Department of Military Affairs began operating at the facility in December, 1998. The State has been given a 50-year lease at Pickett by the U.S. Army for a new Guard headquarters building. This is a significant military facility with many important transportation related issues to consider, including those relating to the joint military/civilian airport, rail access and highway access. It should be noted that Fort Pickett, in addition to its importance as a military facility, is an important contributor to the local and regional economy in terms of both civilian employment opportunity and the economic impact of significant troop movement. It is important that this asset be developed to its highest potential including all aspects relating to transportation.

While not military facilities per se, it should be noted that there are two Military Operations Areas (MOA's) in airspace over the district. These MOA's have important impacts on general aviation within the region and should be considered carefully in any future multimodal transportation plan.

FACTOR 4: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT, PROMOTE ENERGY CONSERVATION AND IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

The Piedmont Planning District is a rural region of 2,818 square miles and a total regional population of 84,905 in 1990. As such, basic energy requirements for the routine transportation of population and goods is proportionately greater than would be normal in urban areas. Specifically the population density of the Piedmont Planning District in 1990 is only 30.3 persons per square mile. This compares to the population density of Virginia in 1990 of 151.8 persons per square mile (**Exhibit 6**). When viewed in relation to the Commonwealth as a whole, basic transportation energy efficiency might be characterized as being low. However, the physical isolation of much of the region's population necessitates greater than average travel for basic access economic opportunity, services and commerce. Consequently, within the Piedmont Planning District, the issue of energy use is mostly viewed as a factor which makes rural living more expensive and impedes access to economic opportunity, services and commerce.

For the purpose of the regional transportation needs assessment, it is not expected that there will be proposed or implemented any transportation related energy use goals, objectives or programs at either the local or regional level of consideration.

The entire Piedmont Planning District is economically underdeveloped as measured by low income attainment and high unemployment, underemployment, and poverty. Economic underdevelopment contribute directly to a myriad of serious social problems including those relating to health care, education, and housing. Transportation obstacles of various forms contribute directly and indirectly to deter effective development of the local regional economies.

While it is not fair to blame transportation obstacles or the only significant course of economic and social problems, transportation obstacles are obviously significant factors to consider. Accordingly, it is expected that economic and social factors will be a prominent focus in any future transportation plan for the Piedmont Planning District.

Energy and environmental efforts of transportation decisions will be considered but will not carry the same weight as economic and social factors in future regional transportation plans.

The vast majority of the Piedmont Planning District is rural and sparsely developed. The vast majority of all district territories is in cropland, pasture or forest land use. Nonetheless, there are important transportation related issues which stem from new development within the district. An important example of this is the new road developments which result from land subdivision. Accordingly, it is expected that landuse regulations will be addressed in any future Piedmont Planning District regional transportation plan.

In September 1977 the Economic Development Administration (EDA) designated Farmville to be the Primary Economic Development Center (EDC) for the Piedmont Economic Development

District (EDD). This growth center provides opportunities for regional services which may include retail and wholesale trade, health services, higher education, and employment opportunities. Secondary Economic Development Centers recommended in the area were Blackstone, Kenbridge-Victoria, and Crewe-Burkeville.

The Piedmont Planning District also has industrial parks located in each County. All of the industrial parks would benefit enormously from road improvements or road additions to them.

It is expected that the localities of the Piedmont Planning District will abide by any State plans developed pursuant to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. However, it is not expected that any future district transportation plan will deal with this issue in any detail as this is viewed as a state responsibility.

FACTOR 5: ENHANCEMENT THE INTEGRATION AND CONNECTIVITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM, ACCESS BETWEEN MODES, FOR PEOPLE AND FREIGHT

No territories within the Piedmont Planning District adjoin another State. Accordingly, this factor is not expected to be relevant to the District except possibly as it may relate to larger substate regional impacts, eg. new interstate highway projects.

Bicycle and pedestrian transportation facilities have a particular appeal in rural and economically underdeveloped areas as they provide the citizens with relatively low cost transportation options in areas where they are practically feasible. Obviously such modes of transportation are severely limited as modes of transportation to more significant numbers of persons over long distances. However, within the district's larger communities and employment centers, there may be a number of practical and affordable bicycle and pedestrian facility opportunities which, if developed, could help to move significant numbers of persons to and from employment, shopping and services opportunities.

Additionally, in rural sparsely populated areas, there may be additional opportunities to develop bicycle and pedestrian facilities, in support of recreational areas or tourism activities. Boating and horseback riding are two more recreation related transportation modes which might have good applications in the region.

FACTOR 6: PROMOTE EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION

Management systems relating to the implementation of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21) are to be developed at the federal level of government. So far as is presently known, there is no requirement or expectation that the development of the management system

will include or consider any direct local or regional input. In brief the management systems required by 23 U.S.C. 303 are as follows:

Management Systems

In one (1) year Secretary to Issue Regulations:

- Pavement on the Federal-aid System
- Bridges on and off the Federal-aid System
- Highway Safety
- Congestion
- Public Transportation Facilities and Equipment
- Intermodal Transportation Facilities and Systems

Penalty for non-compliance after FY 1995

Traffic Monitoring System

- Secretary to issue guidelines and requirements

At this time, and for the purposes of the Piedmont Regional Transportation Strategy, no specific action is required to address this factor.

FACTOR 7: EMPHASIZE THE PRESERVATION OF THE EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

This factor is presumed to be a state responsibility. However, the Piedmont Planning District Commission would support this concept whenever appropriate.

CHAPTER III
TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

CHAPTER III

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

INTRODUCTION

A Regional Transportation Task Force has been established which includes a diversity of representatives from throughout the region as well as from Local and State Government. A listing of Task Force members is attached to this document as **(Exhibit 8)**. All parties have been invited to submit specific objectives, strategies, projects (studies, equipment, and capital improvements) and activities designed to address identified transportation needs. Those specific projects are listed in Chapter III. This listing makes no assessment as to technical or financial feasibility for the new projects nor does it make any determination as to merit or priority. The summary is presented as an overview of completed and ongoing/current transportation projects as well as future transportation opportunities which may be possible for further development.

**PIEDMONT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS
July 1999**

| <u>PROJECT</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Farmville Regional Airport Road Improvements Study | TBD |
| Prince Edward County Sandy River Reservoir Trails Capital Improvements | \$100,000 |
| Prince Edward County Little Buffalo Mountain Bike Trails | TBD |
| Regional Bicycle Plan (covering Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward) | \$6,000 (currently active) |
| * Prince Edward Parallel lane U.S. Route 15 between Farmville and Hampden-Sydney | \$3,500,00 |
| Prince Edward County Rural Bus Service Study | TBD |
| State Route 628 - Study and Capital Improvements for Improved Access to Prince Edward County Schools | \$1,500,000 |
| Farmville Area Bus Bench Shelters Capital Improvements | TBD |
| Civil Rights in Education Heritage Trails Driving Tour Capital Improvements | \$475,000 |
| Wilson/Kautz Raid Driving Tour Capital Improvements | \$260,000 |
| Town of Victoria Railroad Roundhouse Museum and Park Capital Improvements | \$533,251 |
| Town of Farmville Train Station and Caboose Restoration | \$109,250 (under construction) |
| Town of Blackstone Transportation Enhancement Initiative | \$ 90,200 (under construction) |
| Town of Burkeville Norfolk/Southern Railroad Station Restoration | \$524,800 (under construction) |

| <u>PROJECT</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Final Engineering Plans For The Extension Of The Buckingham Branch Railroad To The Buckingham Industrial Park | \$ 45,000 |
| Route 40 Corridor Study | Completed |
| Route 60 Corridor Study | Completed |
| Expansion Of U.S. Route 60 To Four Lanes Capital Improvements | TBD |
| Expansion Of U.S. Route 15 To Four Lanes | TBD |
| Transportation Study For Buckingham Industrial/Commercial Corridor | TBD |
| Victoria/Kenbridge/Lunenburg Public Transportation Initiative Study and Equipment | \$ 98,665 (completed) |
| Town of Farmville Small Urban Area Transportation Plan Update | \$30,000 to 35,000 (currently active) |
| Town of Blackstone Small Urban Area Transportation Plan Update | \$15,000 to 20,000 (currently active) |
| * Route 307 Improvements | \$176,000 (completed) |
| Bristol Rail Passenger Study | Completed |
| Lunenburg County Kits Creek Bridge Replacement on Route 49 | TBD |
| Continue Route 40 sight and safety improvements in Lunenburg County | TBD |
| Installation of traffic light at truck bypass at intersection on Route 40 and State Route 661 | TBD |
| Crewe Railroad House Enhancement Project | \$539,950 |
| Charlotte Court House Transportation Enhancement Initiative | \$1,665,416 |
| Amelia Transportation Enhancement Initiative | \$101,700 |
| Town of Farmville Culvert Installation | \$366,250 (under construction) |

| <u>PROJECT</u> | <u>BUDGET</u> |
|--|-----------------------|
| * TransAmerica Corridor Study | \$600,000 (completed) |
| * Route 15 Buckingham Bridge Replacement (James River: John H. Cocke Memorial Bridge at Bremo Bluff | \$10,090,000 |
| * Route 40 Charlotte Bridge Replacement at Cub Creek | \$1,558,000 |
| * Route 307 Reconstruction and Realign Intersection at Prince Edward and Nottoway Intersection | \$2,471,000 |
| * Farmville Main Street 2 lane bridge replacement over Appomattox River | \$1,556,000 |
| * Amelia Courthouse Curb and Gutter and Sidewalk | \$552,000 |
| * Lunenburg Route 49 Safety Improvements | \$1,400,000 |
| * Nottoway 460 Business Bridge Replacement NS Railroad | \$1,340,000 |
| * Blackstone South Main Street 4 Lane | \$4,300,000 |
| * Blackstone Nottoway Avenue 2 Lane | \$2,292,000 |

Asterick (*) denotes projects which are listed in the 1999-2000 VDOT's Six Year Improvement Program.

Under the Transportation Planning Program the Piedmont Planning District Commission has held and sponsored the following Transportation related workshops on:

- The Secondary Road System
- Public Bus Transportation
- Bicycle Facilities and Accommodations
- Airport Zoning
- Public Rail Transit

CHAPTER IV

TRANSPORTATION POLICY GOALS AND STRATEGIES

CHAPTER IV

TRANSPORTATION POLICY GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Transportation Policy: The efficient movement of goods, services and people, is essential to economic viability and quality of life of the region. It is the policy of the Piedmont Planning District Commission to establish goals, objectives and strategies designed to improve all transportation systems, both internal and external to the region, to most effectively serve the social, cultural and economic needs of all citizens of the region.

Transportation Goals:

Goal One: It is the goal of the Piedmont Planning District Commission to establish a system of ongoing planning to identify all modes of transportation needs including those relating to: 1) streets, roads and highways, 2) rail service, 3) air transportation, 4) pedestrian and bicycle trails and 5) water based transportation.

Goal Two: On the basis of identified transportation needs, it is the goal of the Piedmont Planning District Commission to facilitate through a regional transportation task force comprised of representatives from State and Local Government; transportation service providers; and transportation services consumer groups (education, health care, etc.), the identification of specific projects, programs and activities which can be brought to bear to address the transportation needs of the region. See **Exhibit 8** "Piedmont Transportation Planning Task Force Members and Mailing List."

Goal Three: Given the enormity of the cost of transportation services and systems, it is the goal of the Piedmont Planning District Commission to identify potential funding and financing opportunities which can be applied to specific projects, programs and activities to address the transportation needs of the region.

Goal Four: Given the importance of the intermodal coordination in achieving the greatest efficiency of transportation systems, it is the goal of the Piedmont Planning District Commission to continue educational and informational programs concerning transportation systems and services and their relationship to economic viability and quality of life of the region.

Specific Objectives, Strategies and Projects and Activities:

Pursuant to the general goals stated above, a Regional Transportation Task Force has been established which includes a diversity of representatives from throughout the region as well as from Local and State Government. All parties have been invited to submit specific objectives, strategies, projects (studies, equipment, and capital improvements) and activities designed to address identified transportation needs. Those specific recommendations are listed in Chapter III. This listing makes no assessment as to technical or financial feasibility for new projects nor does it make any determination as to merit or priority. The summary is presented as an overview of completed and ongoing/current transportation projects as well as future transportation opportunities which may be possible for further development.

EXHIBITS

Piedmont Transportation Planning
Task Force Members and
Mailing List
07-01-99

| | <u>NAME AND ADDRESS</u> | <u>AREA REPRESENTING</u> |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | Robert E. Bryant Buckingham Branch Railroad Co. P.O. Box 336 Dillwyn, Virginia 23936 983-3300 | Rail |
| 2. | Rob Bowman Resident Engineer, VDOT 16101 Goodesbridge Road Amelia, Virginia 23002 561-2411 | Roads and Highways |
| 3. | Alan Leatherwood Resident Engineer, VDOT P.O. Box 10 Dillwyn, Virginia 23936 983-2017 | Roads and Highways |
| 4. | Darrel Feasel Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation 1401 E. Broad Street Richmond, Virginia 23219 786-8089 | Public Transportation |
| 5. | Julie Adams Farmville Area Bus Town of Farmville P.O. Drawer 368 Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-7433 | Public Transportation |
| 6. | Tom Jolly Department of Rehabilitative Services 1506 S. Main Street Unit 3 Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-8189 | Special Needs |

NAME AND ADDRESS

AREA REPRESENTING

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------------|
| 7. | Kris Allen Department of Rehabilitative Services 1506 S. Main Street Unit 3 Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-8189 | Special Needs |
| 8. | Richard Austin, Director Central Virginia Transportation P.O. Box 22 Cumberland, Virginia 23040 492-4926 | Public Transportation |
| 9. | Walter Pribble Transportation Engineer Senior Virginia Department of Transportation 1401 E. Broad Street Richmond, Virginia 23219 786-9480 | Multi-Modal |
| 10. | Mr. J. Phil Hopkins Transportation Engineering Programs Supervisor Virginia Department of Transportation 1401 E. Broad Street Richmond, Virginia 23219 786-2985 | Multi-Modal |
| 11. | Rob Anderson Piedmont Bike Shop 136 N. Main Street Farmville, Virginia 23901 315-0066 | Bicycles |
| 12. | Robert L. Mann Airport Director 115 Plant Ave. Crewe, Virginia 23930 645-9393 or 645-1191 | Airport |
| 13. | Fred Sanger Airport Manager 100 W. Elm Street Blackstone, Virginia 23824 292-7251 or 292-7847 | Airport |

NAME AND ADDRESS

AREA REPRESENTING

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------------------|
| 14. | Tommy Grimes Airport Director Farmville Regional Airport 130 Wedgewood Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-9016 | Airport |
| 15. | Sidney Smyth Airport Director Route 2, Box 267D Kenbridge, Virginia 23944 696-1798 or (h)676-3804 | Airport |
| 16. | Will Rogers P.O. Drawer 248 Crossroads Community Services Board Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-7049 | Special Needs |
| 17. | Sharon Harrup STEPS Inc. Rt. 2 Box 292 Farmville, Virginia 23901 392-5649 | Special Needs |
| 18. | Fred Caudill Norfolk and Southern Corp. Norfolk & Western Railway Co. Division Office Crewe, Virginia 23930 645-6311 | Rail |
| 19. | J.D. Barkley II Resident Engineer, VDOT P.O. Box 759 Halifax, Virginia 24558 476-6342 | Roads and Highways |
| 20. | Earl Campbell Center Manager United Parcel Service Route 2, Box 17 Keysville, Virginia 23947 736-8472 | Freight Carrier |

NAME AND ADDRESS

AREA REPRESENTING

- | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| 21. | Kim Dunkum Kim Dunkum Trucking Route 3, Box 374 Scottsville, Virginia 24590 983-2146 | Freight Carrier |
| 22. | Jeff Kessler Lynchburg District Planning Engineer VDOT P. O. Box 11649 Lynchburg, Virginia 24506 804-947-6577 | VDOT |
| 23. | Shelia Harper Southside VA Community College Rt. 1 Box 60 Alberta, Virginia 23821 949-7111 | Special Needs |
| 24. | Bob Vogt Southside VA Community College Rt. 1 Box 15 Keysville, Virginia 23947 736-8489 | Special Needs |
| 25. | Robert Reitmeir, Director Nottoway Dept. of Social Services P.O. Box 26 Nottoway, Virginia 23955 645-8494 | Special Needs |
| 26. | Martha Moyse, Director Amelia Department of Social Services P.O. Box 136 Amelia, Virginia 23002 561-2681 | Special Needs |
| 27. | Braxton Apperson III Director Buckingham Department of Social Services P.O. Box 170 Buckingham, Virginia 23921 969-4246 | Special Needs |

NAME AND ADDRESS

AREA REPRESENTING

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------------------------------|
| 28. | Shawn M. Rozier, Director Charlotte Department of Social Services P.O. Box 440 Charlotte C. H., Virginia 23923 542-5164 | Special Needs |
| 29. | Paul G. Oswell, Director Cumberland Department of Social Services Rt. 3 Box 2 Cumberland, Virginia 23040 492-4915 | Special Needs |
| 30. | Dottie A. Newcomb, Director Lunenburg Department of Social Services Courthouse Square Lunenburg, Virginia 23952 (804) 696-2134 | Special Needs |
| 31. | Director Prince Edward Department of Social Services P.O. Box 628 Farmville, Virginia 23901 (804) 392-3113 | Special Needs |
| 32. | Dick Bratcher Vice President IITS/Information Technology Services 201 High Street Coyner Building Longwood College Farmville, Virginia 23901 (804) 395-2034 | Telecommunication/Special Needs |
| 33. | Carroll Kay Vice-President of Sales and Traffic Kyanite Mining Corp. P.O. Box 486 Dillwyn, VA 23936 (804) 983-2085 | Freight |

NAME AND ADDRESS

AREA REPRESENTING

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------|
| 34. | Cecil Benninghove Product Development and Community Relations Solite Corporation P.O. Box 84 New Canton, VA 23123 (804) 581-3226 | Freight |
| 35. | Tharpe Trucking Co. Inc. Beverly Kunath Route 1, Box 1815 Drakes Branch, VA 23937 (804) 568-4171 | Freight Carrier |
| 36. | Jonathan Pickett Prince Edward County Planner P.O. Box 382 Farmville, VA 23901 (804) 392-8837 | Roads and Highways |
| 37. | William E. Trout, III, Ph.D. American Canal Society 35 Towana Road Richmond, VA 23226 (804) 288-1334 | Canals |