

Commonwealth Regional Council

August 2025 Items of Interest

Ashley Way Homes - Keysville

The Ashley Way Homes in Keysville mark a major step forward in the region's Affordable Workforce Housing Project, with five new homes now completed and officially receiving their Certificates of Occupancy. Earlier this month, CRC and Virginia Housing conducted a site visit compliance review, confirming that the homes meet program standards and are ready for families. This development represents a key milestone in expanding access to safe, affordable housing and supporting workforce growth across Southside Virginia.



Drakes Branch Comp Plan

CRC staff continue to assist the Town of Drakes Branch Planning Commission with its Comprehensive Plan update. At the most recent work session on July 30, the Commission reviewed and accepted the draft of Chapter 1: Introduction with edits. To gather community input, CRC launched a survey campaign, distributing flyers throughout town, including inserts in upcoming water bill mailings, and providing paper copies at the Drakes Branch Town Hall/Municipal Building for residents without internet access.

VDOT STARS Interchange Study - Farmville

CRC staff continue to participate in the VDOT STARS Study for the US 460 Business (East 3rd Street) and Persimmon Tree Fork Road/Milnwood Road intersection in Farmville, with meetings held July 16 and 28, 2025. The study reviewed existing and projected 2045 traffic conditions, noting significant growth from planned developments, including a large data center. Three potential improvement alternatives were evaluated — a conventional design with signal and lane modifications, a thru-cut configuration, and a hybrid roundabout — with analysis focused on operational performance, safety benefits, and crash reduction. Next steps include identifying a preferred alternative, conducting public outreach in August–September 2025, and finalizing recommendations by October 2025.

VATI Site Visits - Lunenburg County

CRC staff joined Lunenburg County officials and Planet Networks for a VATI broadband site visit this month, observing construction work and progress on expanding high-speed internet access in the county. The visit provided an opportunity to review ongoing installation efforts in the field and discuss next steps for improving broadband connectivity for residents and businesses.



Upcoming Funding Opportunities:

- **Rescue Squad Assistance Fund (RSAF) – Fall 2025**
 -  Applications open August 1 – September 15, 2025
 - Funds EMS vehicles, equipment, computers, training programs, and recruitment/retention initiatives for licensed EMS agencies and organizations.
- **AFID Infrastructure Grant – Fall 2025**
 -  Expected to open September/October 2025
 - Supports capital projects like food hubs, farmers' markets, commercial kitchens, and value-added processing facilities (meats, dairy, produce).
- **Rural and Tribal Assistance Pilot Program (RTA)**
 -  Applications accepted September 8 – October 8, 2025
 - Provides up to \$54.2 million in no-match grants for legal, technical, and financial advisory services to help advance rural and tribal infrastructure projects (roads, bridges, utilities).
- **VTC VA250 Marketing Leverage Program**
 -  Applications open September 16 – October 23, 2025
 - Offers matching funds for marketing initiatives that promote Virginia's 250th commemoration events and tourism opportunities.
- **VTC Special Events & Festivals Program**
 -  Applications open July 22 – September 11, 2025
 - Supports marketing and promotion for special events and festivals that increase visitation and tourism spending in Virginia.

The CRC provides free grant writing services for member localities and local 501C3 non-profits.