

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Federal acts, local wins

Inside:

Draper Aden Associates releases current Water and Wastewater Rate Report

Member Spotlight on Town of Christiansburg

2022 Local Government Day pics

American
Rescue
Plan Act



Infrastructure
Investment &
Jobs Act



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ABOUT THE COVER

Localities have been riding a raft of Federal actions with money either trickling down or flowing directly to local governments. In this issue of *VTC* we find out how localities are making good use of the funds already dispersed and how they can make best use of the funds still to come.

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General Assembly Season's Greetings!

AS WRITE THIS, VML STAFF are deep in the trenches of yet another General Assembly session. It's rewarding but exhausting work. With crossover approaching on February 15th, we are hoping for a short lull before the craziness begins again for the second half. Our hardworking staff are committed to maintaining the funding, land use authority and rights that are important to our members. I know all the information we send out can be overwhelming at times, but it's essential that our local government leaders stay engaged. So, thank you for continuing to respond to our action alerts and for reading our *eNews* stories!

Because we are sending out so much information about legislation in our newsletter, I won't get into specifics here, but I do want to mention a couple bills with big significance for two towns.

The first is a bill that asks that the Town of St. Charles be terminated. There was a wonderful story about its history by Megan Schnabel in the *Cardinal News* on January 31st. The town was created in 1914 and had its peak in the 1950s when, thanks to the booming coal industry, it had 500 residents. Sadly, the town's population is now 73 residents. Lee County, in which St. Charles is situated, still must pay for the elections, but no one has run in town elections for the last two cycles. So, the county's only recourse is to terminate the town.

Similarly, recently introduced legislation threatens to "repeal" the Town of Pound's charter in July of 2023 because, in the bill patron's estimation, the town needs to function better. This legislation is flawed because it fails to provide metrics or a method to judge the viability of the town. But I can tell you that Town of Pound Mayor Carson is committed to keeping her

"small town with a big heart!"

VML does not like to see our localities struggling. We are working with the Town of Pound to help them become successful. In fact, our resources are available to any of our members at any time so please do not hesitate to reach out for a helping hand. We also love opportunities to feature great things happening in our member localities, including our towns, which we will do in the March issue of Virginia Town & City when we tell you about some "Small Town Successes!"

The General Assembly Session finishes on March 12th (but who's counting the days until then?). Please look out for webinars and summaries of all the new legislation affecting localities along with more information about

ARPA and IJJA funds and other items of interest to local government.

In closing, I want to say that recently several people have asked me how they could become more involved with VML. I encourage everyone who is interested in becoming more involved with your league to consider serving on one of our six policy committees or on our Legislative Committee, all of which meet in the summer months. The six policy committees are: Finance, Transportation, General Laws, Community and Economic Development, Environmental Quality, and Human Development and Education. Members to all our committees will be appointed in the spring so please look out for the applications coming soon.

And yes...spring is coming! We at VML look forward to the warmer weather and the chance to spend less time with legislators and more time with our members. See you soon!





Learn more about these events and additional opportunities at www.vml.org

March 12-14 VBCOA Mid-Year Conference - Staunton, VA

May 25-27 MEPAV Annual Conference - Virginia Beach, VA

Oct. 1-4 VML Annual Conference - Richmond, VA

PEOPLE



VML welcomes Hutchinson as newest staff member

Carter Hutchinson recently began work with the Virginia Municipal League as the director of fiscal policy. Prior to joining the League staff, Hutchinson served as deputy secretary of finance for Virginia under Governor Ralph Northam. In this role, Carter helped develop and execute the Commonwealth's budget, including the unprecedented appropriation of more

than 12.1 billion dollars in emergency federal funding to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before that, Hutchinson worked as an advisor on the political campaigns of Northam, as well as Governors Terry McAuliffe and Tim Kaine. Hutchinson holds a bachelor's degree in history from Hampden-Sydney College.



- Norman -

Spencer Norman joined the Town of Ashland as planner II in the Planning & Community Development Department. Mr. Norman grew up in the small town of Smithfield, VA. He attended the College of William and Mary and graduated in 2013 with bachelor's degrees in history and government. In 2017, he earned a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. Mr. Norman worked for the Counties of York and Henrico in local government planning before arriving in the Ashland.



- Miller -

Martha J. Miller was hired in November 2021 as the Town of Ashland's community engagement manager – a newly created position focused on community engagement and tourism marketing. Ms. Miller is a graduate of James Madison University's School of Media Arts & Design (2005) and holds a master's degree in writing from Johns Hopkins University (2011). Prior to joining the town, Ms. Miller worked as a communications consultant and freelance writer. She spent 10 years working in the public relations, nonprofit, and internal communications fields in Washington, DC before returning to her hometown of Ashland in 2017. Ms. Miller reports directly to the town manager.



- Houck -

Emmy Houck joined the Town of Ashland as parks & recreation coordinator – another newly created position – in January 2022. A graduate of Georgia Southern University, Ms. Houck holds

Mayo retires after 25 years with City of Roanoke

At the end of 2021, **Melinda Mayo**, the communications and media officer for the City of Roanoke retired.



- Mayo -

During her tenure she served four city managers. Ms. Mayo started with the city in 1997, and has worked on award-winning campaigns, including "Every Drop Counts," "Clean and Green," and "Eat for Education." Mayo also has supported the planning and execution of the Virginia Municipal League's Host Night events in 2003, 2009, 2014, and 2019, when Roanoke hosted the annual conference. Throughout her career with the city, Mayo was proud to represent the municipality and serve its residents. In a public announcement, the city wished her the best in her next chapter and expressed appreciation for her dedication, commitment, and impact throughout the years.

Town of Ashland welcomes four new full-time staff

Nicole Preisner, Spencer Norman, Martha J. Miller, & Emmy Houck

Between August 2021 and January 2022, the Town of Ashland welcomed four new full-time staff members. The business development coordinator and planner II positions were hired to fill vacancies in the town's Planning & Community Development Department, while the community engagement manager and parks & recreation Coordinator are new positions made possible by funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).



- Preisner -

Prior to joining the town, she was the senior administration manager for the Irrigation Association. Ms. Preisner works within the Planning & Community Development Department.

Nicole Preisner was hired as the business development coordinator for the Town of Ashland in August 2021. A graduate of Virginia Tech (2016), Ms. Preisner studied Applied Economic Management.

PEOPLE

a bachelor's degree in Political Science and a master's degree in Health Education from the University of Florida. She joins the town with 12 years of experience in university recreation and corporate wellness program management.

Rogers is Charlottesville's new interim city manager

On January 31st, **Michael C. Rogers, JD**, MPP, began serving in the role of interim



- Rogers -

city manager for the City of Charlottesville. The city council approved Rogers' appointment and contract at its January 18, 2022, committee meeting. His contract is for a six-month period, unless terminated earlier, such as when the city hires a permanent city manager. The city council engaged Rogers through a contract with The Robert Bobb Group (RBG), a global, minority-owned consultancy, serving municipal, state and territorial governments.

Rogers has more than 30 years of experience in municipal government and the private sector. Rogers has served as city administrator of the District of Columbia and executive director of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the regional planning agency reporting to a regional board of elected officials. He also has acted as chief operating officer / chief financial officer of the City of Petersburg. He has held senior leadership positions with private and nonprofit regional health companies.

Rogers is a longtime member of the International City County Management Association (ICMA), the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA).

Wilmoth earns MEPAV / Fallen Lineman Foundation award



- Wilmoth -

The award is given to only one student in each cohort that demonstrates traits necessary for a successful career as a power line worker.

completed the Southside Virginia Community College Power Line Worker Training Program in November 2021 and earned the SVCC Climbing Higher Award. The

award is given to only one student in each cohort that demonstrates traits necessary for a successful career as a power line worker.

The Climbing Higher Award is made possible by the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia (MEPAV) and the Fallen Lineman Foundation.

To receive this Climbing Higher Award, Wilmoth had to show pride in his work, resilience, dedication, commitment to safety, and loyalty to others in the field. He was recognized with a monetary award and will have his name and picture placed on the wall in the Power Line Worker classroom.

The Power Line Worker Training 11-week program provides both classroom

Movers and shakers

Do you know someone who's on the move? Send your announcements about new hires in local government, promotions, retirements, awards and honors to Rob Bullington at rbullington@vml.org.

and hands-on training in safety, climbing techniques, electrical theory, aerial framing, rigging, operating utility service equipment and commercial drivers' license training.

SVCC offers the Power Line Worker class in Blackstone, VA, at the Occupational/Technical Center in Pickett Park. For information, visit southside.edu/power-line-worker.



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Town of Luray staff promotions



Following a recent promotion, Danielle N. Alger began her new role as Town of Luray deputy town clerk/treasurer on January 1st. Ms. Alger previously served as the town's utility billing clerk, a position she assumed in 2007. In her new role, Alger is responsible for the town's accounts, payable,

- Alger -

payroll, assisting with the year-end audit completion, maintaining the town's fixed asset inventory records, and transcribing town council minutes. She also oversees the town's CDBG Revolving Loan Program for downtown businesses.



Also beginning a new role for the Town of Luray on January 1st was Danielle P. Babb who is the town's new clerk/treasurer. Babb previ-

- Babb -

ously served as the deputy clerk/treasurer since 2006. In her new role, Bab will direct the town's financial affairs and maintain the official town records. Furthermore, Babb is responsible for the town's accounts payable, payroll, human resources, and financial reporting to the state and federal governments. Babb also oversees the administrative staff that assist residents with utility and tax issues. She is a graduate of Bridgewater College.

York County staff announcements and promotions

York County's Department of Economic Development and Tourism Development Office have joined to become the Department of Economic and Tourism Development. The merger became effective at the end of 2021.



Jim Noel, director of Economic Development for 28 years, helms the department. Under his leadership, in addition to promoting business expansion in the County, the Economic Development Department developed an award-winning home-based business program that is utilized by many localities in the state and nation.

- Noel -



Kristi Olsen, former manager of tourism development, has been promoted to deputy director. The county's tourism program began as an office of one (Kristi herself) in 2002 and has grown to become a dynamic function that has overseen the opening of the revitalized waterfront area – Riverwalk Landing – and the development of several events that have drawn visitors to historic Yorktown.

- Olsen -



The county has hired Matt Johnson to serve as assistant director. Matt joins the Department of Economic and Tourism Development from the City of Newport News. He is a graduate of Christopher Newport

- Johnson -

University and is highly knowledgeable about many regional initiatives and partnerships of which York County is a member.

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York County's Department of Information Technology has new leadership effective



- Wyatt -

February 1. **Tim Wyatt**, formerly the deputy director, has been promoted to director of information technology upon the retirement of Dr. Adam Frisch. Tim joined York County IT in 2004 and prior to that served as an intern. Among other responsibilities, the IT department ensures the security of the public's electronic interactions with the county. In furtherance of that mission, Tim developed and presented a citizen cybersecurity program that has been presented to many groups and has won both state and national awards.

Caywood is Roanoke County's new administrator



- Caywood -

In December, the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to appoint **Richard L. Caywood**, P.E. as its new county administrator. Caywood has served as Roanoke County's assistant county administrator since March 2013 with management responsibilities over a wide range of operations, including public safety, social services, community planning and development, libraries, and parks, recreation, and tourism.

Caywood received a bachelor of science degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Virginia and a master of science degree in Civil Engineering from Virginia Tech. He has been an International City / County Management Association (ICMA) credentialed manager since 2017 and he completed the Senior Executive Institute conducted by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia in 2019. Caywood was named the Marcia Mashaw Memorial Award (Assistant of the Year) recipient by the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) in 2017 and he served on the VLGMA Executive Committee from 2017 – 2020. He has been a licensed professional engineer in Virginia since 1999. Prior to joining Roanoke County, Caywood spent 20 years with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) in various administrative roles.

Caywood currently represents Roanoke County on agency boards and commissions, including: the Roanoke Valley Transporta-

tion Planning Organization, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health Care, Regional Court Community Corrections Advisory Board, Regional Drug Court Advisory Board, Regional Center for Animal Care and Protection, Roanoke Valley Regional Detention Center Commission, and the South Peak Community Development Authority.

City of Chesapeake staff updates: Solis and Little-Hill



- Solis -

On November 22, 2021, **Brian S. Solis**, AICP assumed the role of deputy city manager for community development for the City of Chesapeake. In his new role, Solis will serve as a member of the city's executive leadership team and oversee the city's community development departments including Economic Development, Planning, Development & Permits, and Parks, Recreation & Tourism.

Solis is making a return to the City of Chesapeake, having formerly served as both a current planner and Chesapeake Bay preservation area planner with the city, from 1995 until 1999. Solis has spent the past 22 years in various roles with the City of Virginia Beach, including serving as assistant to the city manager for special projects, director of the resort management office, interim roles as the director of the Strategic Growth Areas Office and co-director of Parks and Recreation as well as transportation planning manager and planning, design & development administrator. He has an extensive background in capital program administra-

tion, innovation in local government and organizational strategic planning.

Solis holds a master of public administration degree and a bachelor of science degree in Geography with an Urban & Regional Planning emphasis from Old Dominion University. He is also a graduate of the LEAD Program at the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia. Solis is certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and has been credentialed as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Associate by the U.S. Green Building Council.

On January 1st, **Pamela T. Little-Hill**, formerly the director of social services in the City of Portsmouth, began work as the City of Chesapeake's new director of human services. She replaces Jill Baker who recently retired. In her new role, Little-Hill will be responsible for overseeing all aspects of social services, child welfare, juvenile detention, and adult protective services, among other department functions.

In a career spanning more than 30 years, Little-Hill previously served as Portsmouth's interim director of Behavioral Healthcare Services from August 2020 until April 2021. Prior to coming to the City of Portsmouth, she worked for the Hampton/Newport News Community Services Board as the REACH director from 2013 until 2016. She has an extensive background in the oversight of family service, crisis, benefit, mental health, and intellectual disability programs.

Little-Hill holds a master's degree in Social Work from the City University of New



- Little-Hill -

In Memoriam: Gretna Town Manager David Lilly

In late December, **David Lilly**, Town of Gretna's manager for about 40 years, passed at the age of 67. Lilly was remembered as an insightful source of information for the town. Mayor Keith Motley observed that Lilly "had a wealth of knowledge. That was one of the strengths he had." Lilly was a water plant operator for the town of Gretna before becoming town manager in the early 1980s. Born Dec. 19, 1954, in West Virginia, Lilly had lived in Gretna since the mid-1960s when his father moved his family to the town. Lilly was president of Gretna Youth Sports for years and enjoyed coaching, boating on Smith Mountain Lake, playing drums, making knives and spending time with his family.



York at Hunter College, and a bachelor of arts degree in Sociology from City University of New York at Queens College. She is a Licensed Master Social Worker in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Altavista welcomes Shanaberger as new town manager

In January, **Gary Shanaberger** began work as the town manager in Altavista.



- Shanaberger -

Previously, Shanaberger had served as the town manager of Appomattox since 2017. During his time in Appomattox, Shanaberger worked on a variety of projects, including: the Meadowlark CBDG Project, the Downtown Revitalization Project, the Church Street Waterline Project, significant repairs to Town Hall, permanent restrooms at the Kiddie Park, the Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration, and conversion to new accounting and management software.

Prior to his tenure in Appomattox, Shanaberger held the position of business analyst and special projects coordinator in the Office of Community and Economic Development/Small Business Development Center at Longwood University. Before that, he owned and managed his family's Farmville business specializing in outdoor power equipment. He earned his degrees, a bachelor of science in business administration and an MBA, both from Longwood.

In Altavista, Shanaberger will be filling the shoes of longtime town manager Waverly Coggsdale, who departed in August to become Strasbourgs town manager.



In Memoriam: Donald Baker

In late 2021, **Donald Baker** mayor of the Town of Clintwood Virginia passed away at age 83. He served on the Clintwood Town Council and as mayor for 41 years and was still serving at the time of his death. He served on numerous state and local boards over the years. He was appointed by five different governors to serve on the Virginia Coalfield Development Authority serving as the only person to chair the authority for two successive terms. He was in the family coal mining business until his retirement and served as a bank director of what is now Trust Bank. He served Little League Baseball in Virginia in different capacities for 61 years last serving as its state treasure. The community was deeply saddened by his passing and many local state and federal leaders paid tribute to Mayor Baker's leadership including US Senator Mark Warner, US Congressman Morgan Griffith, Virginia House of Delegates Members Terry Kilgore, William Wampler, III and Will Moorefield along with State Senators Todd Pillion and Travis Hackworth and other elected officials. The Dickenson County Virginia Board of Supervisors passed a resolution that was presented in a ceremony to the family and the Clintwood Town Council named his son, and attorney, Greg Baker as honorary Mayor to serve out the remainder of his father's term.

Watkins appointed Petersburg fire chief

Tina R. Watkins has been appointed chief of the Petersburg-Fire Rescue Department. She is the first woman to hold the position in its nearly 250-year history.

Watkins started her career as a firefighter and in the past 11 years, she has served as battalion chief for Richmond Fire and Emergency Services where she supervised five stations and six fire companies.

Watkins earned a master's degree in Leadership with an Emphasis in Emergency

Management and Executive Fire Leadership and a bachelor of science degree in Public Safety and Business Administration. She holds professional certifications through FEMA, the National Fire Academy, and the Virginia State Fire Program. Watkins holds numerous professional development certifications.

"Not only does Ms. Watkins have extensive experience in fire administration and field operations, she is a seasoned professional in budget management, enforcement of regulations, policies and procedures development needed to effectively lead Petersburg Fire-Rescue with over 75 members and a \$4 million dollar budget," said Deputy City Manager Tangelia Innis.



- Watkins -



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Town of Hillsboro leverages ARPA funds to deliver high-speed broadband

IN NOVEMBER 2021, HILLSBORO Mayor Roger Vance announced that high-speed broadband service was now available to every Hillsboro residence and business via town-owned fiber optic cable. In a press release at the time, Vance said: “I’m proud to say we have solved the rural broadband access problem in Hillsboro through decisive and innovative actions, with the support of federal funding and in collaboration with the private sector.”

Vance announced that with an agreement signed with Fredericksburg-based Internet Service Provider KGI Communications, an array of high-speed residential and commercial broadband service options is now available to Hillsboro consumers. The decision to include construction of the town-owned fiber optic conduit system was part of the town’s larger ReThink9 infrastructure project.

According to Vance, residents and businesses within Hillsboro have been without reliable true broadband since the closure of the Waterford Telephone Company internet service in early 2021. “This has been an untenable and costly hardship on Hillsboro businesses, students, and the many residents required to work remotely. True broadband is not a luxury, it is a necessity for our children’s education, our residents’ livelihoods, and our town’s economic development.”

Vance called Hillsboro’s direct allocation of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds “the linchpin” that allowed the Town to move aggressively toward a solution. “The ARPA funding



Mayor Roger Vance and ReThink9 Project Coordinator Alison Badger celebrate the installation of town-owned fiber optics.

permitted Hillsboro to install its own fiber and then – in cooperation with the Loudoun County Economic Development Authority – provide the financial incentive that accelerated the offering of service to residents and businesses.”

Fredericksburg awarded \$3.25M in Stormwater Local Assistance Funds

THE CITY OF FREDERICKSBURG recently announced that it has been awarded more than \$3.25 million in grant funds from the Commonwealths’ Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) by Virginia’s Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ). The funds will aid the city in achieving stormwater permit-required

pollutant reductions which will help improve the city’s overall stormwater quality and its effects on the Rappahannock River.

The city’s Public Works Department submitted two grant

applications in July 2021 to the VDEQ to address the city’s required reduction of nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediments in stormwater runoff. The first project to receive grant funding is adjacent to the

Village of Idlewild, in which a preliminary study by Wetlands Studies and Solutions, Inc. identified several stream segments experiencing very high/extreme erosion rates along more than a mile of streams. Proposed restoration work would include stabilizing eroding portions, addressing bacterial and aquatic habitat impairments, and promoting channel/floodplain reconnection.

The second project to receive grant awards will seek to improve the existing stormwater management structure located along Smith Run. “Pond D” was constructed twenty years ago to manage runoff from development. A study of the structure suggests modifications may be made by excavating to provide more storage volume to treat runoff.

The city is currently exploring design options for both these projects, with plans to further engage the adjacent communities as more information becomes available.

Read more about the city’s Stormwater Management at www.fredericksburgva.gov/476/Stormwater-Management.



City of Charlottesville establishes Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB)

ON DECEMBER 20TH, the Charlottesville City Council unanimously passed amendments that define the structure, powers, and authorities of the newly established Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). This new Board replaces the current Police Civilian Review board (PCRB). The amendments to the City Code provide the PCOB expanded functions among which are the ability to receive, investigate, and issue findings on complaints from civilians regarding the conduct of law enforcement officers and civilian employees of the police department; investigate and issue findings on incidents, including the use of force by a law enforcement officer; and investigate policies, practices, and procedures of the police department and to make recommendations regarding changes to such policies, practices and procedures.

The Board's Executive Director, Hansel Aguilar, noted that, "Charlottesville should be proud of the arduous journey to amend this ordinance... It is also important to note that we are the smallest jurisdiction in the Commonwealth with a police oversight body, which presents unique opportunities and challenges. I am excited to work with the community and our Police Department to dem-

onstrate how we can restore community-police relations through effective and meaningful oversight."

The proposed ordinance amendments were discussed publicly at several PCRB meetings and at city council's December 6, 2021, meeting. For workshopping the document between public meetings, city councilors appointed a committee consisting of Councilors J. Lloyd Snook and Michael Payne to work alongside PCRB representatives, Vice Chair William "Bill" Mendez and Dr. Jeffrey Fracher.

The proposed ordinance was reviewed by both the city attorney and the outside legal counsel for the PCRB. The ordinance represents many hours of work and collaboration between the city council committee, the PCRB's working committee, and community input from individuals and organizations in the City of Charlottesville. The amended ordinance will go into effect March 1, 2022.

Visit www.charlottesville.gov/1005/Police-Civilian-Review-Board for more information regarding news, updates, and the transformation from the PCRB.



City of Petersburg receives grants to address stormwater management



THE CITY OF PETERSBURG is receiving two grants from the Virginia Community Flood Preparedness Fund that will support a Comprehensive Citywide Drainage Study, updates to the Floodplain Management Ordinance, development of a Resilience Plan, and the hiring of a certified floodplain manager. The grants total \$2,623,558.

The city has been exploring grant funding for a Comprehensive Drainage Study for decades. This grant will enable the city to inventory the antiquated storm sewer system, model the existing conditions of both the closed and open storm sewer systems and surface waters to better identify the source of problem areas, and identify nature-based solutions and other priority projects to alleviate repetitive flooding problems throughout the city. The outcome of the drainage study will be projects that can be implemented to provide flood prevention and protection, as well as equitable community improvement. The Comprehensive Drainage Study will begin in 2022.

The Resilience Plan includes preparing, planning, recovering, and adapting from potential future flooding events. The Community Outreach Plan will educate residents and property owners on floodplain management. The Resilience Plan will be incorporated into the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Loudoun County receives \$10 million in affordable housing grants

ON JANUARY 10, LOUDOUN COUNTY announced that it would be receiving \$10 million in state grants to support affordable multifamily housing in the county and to prepare for Amazon's arrival in Northern Virginia. This funding is in addition to an earlier grant of \$3.75 million to support two affordable multifamily developments in Loudoun County: Tuscarora Crossing Phase 1 and the View at Broadlands.

These grants are part of Virginia Housing's Amazon REACH Program (Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing), which was established in response to concerns about the anticipated impact of Amazon's second headquarters in Arlington on the region's housing prices. Virginia Housing is investing \$75 million in affordable housing. Loudoun County

applied for this funding to support proposed affordable multifamily developments.

Loudoun County will be using the new award of \$10 million to support three proposed developments that are also being considered by the Board of Supervisors for Loudoun County loans:

- \$3.75 million in Amazon REACH funds to the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing to help them in the new construction of Goose Creek Village which includes 80 age-restricted affordable multifamily apartments proposed in Ashburn.
- \$2.545 million in Amazon REACH funds to Good Works and Green Street Housing to help them in the new construction of Waxpool Apartments which includes 52 affordable multifamily apartments proposed in Ashburn.
- \$3.75 million in Amazon REACH funds to Winn Development to help them acquire and rehabilitate Somerset Senior to create 102 age-restricted affordable multifamily apartments proposed in Sterling.

The Amazon REACH funds will help support over 300 new units of affordable rental housing in the county, a need illustrated in the county's recently adopted Unmet Housing Needs Strategic Plan. Renters will have to be meet income eligibility requirements for the apartments once they are built or rehabilitated.

More information about Loudoun County's housing programs may be found online at www.loudoun.gov/housing.



Roanoke programs will increase citizen engagement: Leadership College and ARPA grant applications

CITIZENS IN ROANOKE have two upcoming opportunities to engage with their local government. For starters, the city is accepting registrations for its Spring 2022 Leadership College which will help residents understand things like how the city operates and which department is responsible for what service. City leaders will talk about the vision and future of Roanoke and how residents can make changes in their neighborhood. The nine-week community leadership program which meets Thursday evenings beginning March 17th, is designed to increase the level of effective communication between city government and residents. Registration is free, but participants must live or work in the City of Roanoke and commit to attend seven out of nine sessions.

For information about the Leadership College, contact Josh

Johnson, Neighborhood Services Coordinator, (540) 853-1643, joshua.johnson@roanokeva.gov.

Another opportunity to engage citizens is the city's online applications for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding. Individuals, families, nonprofits, mental health service providers, substance abuse treatment, small businesses, and arts and cultural organizations may apply through the City of Roanoke. Specific ARPA funding has been dedicated for these initiatives, and applications will be evaluated ongoing. For more information and to apply, visit www.roanokeva.gov/starcitystrong.

For information about the ARPA fund application process, contact Angie O'Brien in the City Manager's Office at 540-853-5309, angela.obrien@roanokeva.gov.



UVA Health System accepting donations for 2022 Remote Access Medicine Clinic in Town of Wise



EACH YEAR THE UVA HEALTH System sends Remote Access Medicine (RAM) volunteers to help provide several medical and support services such as emergency care, women's health, endocrinology, dermatology, and telemedicine. RAM is a nonprofit that sets up free weekend clinics with partnered communities across the United States. These clinics provide medical, dental, and vision care to underserved or uninsured individuals at no cost and with no questions asked.

The Remote Access Medicine Clinic in Wise, VA is a collaborative effort by regional groups in Central Appalachia and organizations around the state and nation to provide medical, dental and vision care to the most medically underserved population in the state. This year, the goal is to raise enough money to host a free clinic in Fishersville in November of 2022 at the Augusta Expo.

If you want to help the group reach its goal of \$20,000, please donate at www.tinyurl.com/ramgivecampus.

Online marketplace creates new ways for localities to engage residents living paycheck to paycheck

VML COMMUNITY BUSINESS MEMBER the MITRE Corporation has made us aware of a platform being offered by Prosperity Digital Marketplace to support individuals experiencing financial stress.



Prosperikey.org (PK) connects those living paycheck to paycheck with valuable social service programs, discounted products and services from businesses, philanthropy, and government resources. According to the group, it is the only

marketplace that brings together these diverse groups in one place, to help people improve their financial stability.

PK is a national product with a neighborhood connection. PDM partners with individual, multiple or regional United Ways or nonprofits as 'hubs' to recruit all stakeholders to the platform: Key Members, local businesses, sponsors, and nonprofits. Owing to a revenue sharing model, the major portion of the income gener-

ated by offer fees and sponsors is retained by the hub for reinvestment in the local community.

Businesses, philanthropy, and government can be confident that their support is targeting their neighbors in need. Additionally, as Key Members are purchasing goods in the community, offer redemption can result in an appreciative, loyal, and expanded customer base to the small businesses in the city or towns. Someone may join PK to get a discount on a meal or oil change, but then discovers affordable childcare, new vocational training opportunities, or financial coaching services that result in longer term stability.

Additionally, the new Prosperity-Key debit card allows municipalities and local funders to distribute dollars directly to residents. This enables distribution of guaranteed-income projects, ARPA and other federal program disbursements, disaster relief, enrichment funds for children, and any program that wants to put choice and dignity into the hands of the recipients. Specific merchant types can be predetermined for spending of the funds.

To learn more about how you can engage and help your residents move into financial stability while promoting your local businesses and government resources, contact Chief Executive Officer Kim Morgan, kim.morgan@prosperikey.org.



Federal acts, local wins



American Rescue Plan Act

Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act



Introduction by Rob Bullington

No drips (or oats) to be found here

THE TERM “TRICKLE-DOWN” in reference to economics is credited to Great Depression era humorist Will Rogers who opined in the wake of the stock market crash that “the money was all appropriated for the top in the hopes that it would trickle down to the needy.”



Others cite the late nineteenth century orator, grass-roots politician, and perennial presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan as the progenitor of the “trickle down” concept. In Bryan’s time it was called the “horse-and-sparrow theory” – the idea being if you feed a horse enough oats, some will pass through and wind up on the road for the sparrows.

Whether you think of money as moving like water, or... well, like something else, it’s fair to say that there’s nothing trickling or passing about the funds coming from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) or the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Indeed, the faucet is wide open, and localities are beginning to make use of the largesse and anticipate ways they might use the additional funding yet to arrive.



For this issue of *Virginia Town & City* we asked some experts to help us understand what it all means for Virginia’s localities.

Preston Bryant from McGuireWoods Consulting gushes with information about...

- Federal infrastructure bill to bring more money to Virginia localities
- Virginia airports to receive \$400 million
- Fredericksburg slated to receive ARPA funds for wastewater project
- AlexRenew, Lynchburg, Richmond receive ARPA funds for combined sewer overflow projects

Margaret Rockwell from McGuireWoods Consulting bursts forth with the goods on...

- Making good use of ARPA funds: Kilmarnock, Falls Church, Scottsville
- Get to know the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program

Brittney Kohler and **Carolyn Berndt** from the National League of Cities are founts of wisdom concerning...

- Making the most of the IIJA: Some guidelines for Virginia’s localities



Federal infrastructure bill to bring more money to Virginia localities

IT TOOK A WHILE, but Congress finally passed the long-awaited Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – the “infrastructure bill” – in November 2021. The president wasted no time signing it.

The bill provides, nationwide, \$1.2 trillion for new infrastructure investments, with \$650 billion being the reauthorization of previous baseline appropriations and \$550 billion being new spending. Investments will be in transportation, water, power and energy, public lands, broadband, resiliency, and more.

More than \$500 billion in transportation spending will cover roads, bridges, and other major projects; passenger and freight rail; public transit; airports; ports and waterways; electric vehicle infrastructure; and other road safety projects.

Drinking water and wastewater systems will get nearly \$25 billion. There is \$15 billion dedicated to lead pipe remediation, with another \$9 billion to lead reduction projects in disadvantaged communities. Nearly \$1.5 billion is earmarked for stormwater projects, particularly antiquated combined sewer systems. And there’s \$7.5 billion to build 500,000 electric vehicle charging stations around the country.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has called on governors to prioritize economically stressed or disadvantaged communities in their allocation of federal infrastructure funds for water and wastewater projects, though there is no requirement that states do so.

Nationwide, \$65 billion is appropriated to expand access to high-speed broadband, particularly focused on underserved areas. It also includes funding to make broadband more affordable.

Unlike the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) or the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act is not an “economic stimulus” bill. It is what its title says it is: an infrastructure investment initiative meant to modernize, for the most part, the nation’s transportation and utility systems.

Federal infrastructure funds for Virginia

So, how much federal infrastructure funding will flow to Virginia? And when?

There are many details still to be revealed. But here are some top-line numbers that have been reported.

Virginia will get some \$7 billion for roads and highways and more than \$500 million for bridges. State and local public transit systems will receive \$1.2 billion. State airports will get nearly \$400 million. More than \$100 million will help build electric vehicle charging stations. Local drinking water systems will see more \$700 million. Virginia also will get at least \$100 million for broadband.





Most federal infrastructure funds will be appropriated over a five-year period (FY 22-26), and most funds will use existing federal-state funding avenues, such as the Highway Trust Fund and the Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds. Many such funding avenues include local and/or state matching dollars.

In the first year, FY22, Virginia will receive \$126 million for water and wastewater projects. These funds will be made available through the Virginia Department of Health and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, who administer the drinking water and wastewater revolving loan funds.

How localities can prepare to receive federal funds

First, the Treasury Department must prepare a guidance document – general instructions and criteria – that will spell out when and how the infrastructure funds will be released. The guidance will include what states and localities must do to receive the federal dollars.

Federal infrastructure bill

Understand the Rules. We all know that federal funds come with strings. Assign key staff to develop an in-depth understanding of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and its accompanying rules and criteria.

Begin Planning. Localities should begin assessing their infrastructure and prioritizing the most important projects that will be eligible to receive federal infrastructure funding. Consider what infrastructure is in most need of costly repairs, have high operating costs and can be improved for efficiency, are nearing end of life cycles, can best support underserved communities, or can align with and leverage other major projects.

Begin Budgeting. Many federal and state funding streams, especially grants, require local matching dollars. Localities should begin determining which prioritized projects are likely to require local matching funds so that those dollars can be built into budgets over the next five years.

Communicate Project Priorities to the Governor and General Assembly. The bulk of the federal infrastructure funds will be sent to the states, who then will appropriate the dollars through their budgets and funding streams. Governors and legislatures will have some discretion on where and how to focus the infrastructure investments. Localities should communicate to the governor and local state legislators their priority projects and how the federal infrastructure funds will help advance them.

About the author: *L. Preston Bryant, Jr., is senior vice president at McGuireWoods Consulting. He is a former member of Lynchburg City Council, served for 10 years in the Virginia House of Delegates, and served four years as Virginia's secretary of natural resources. He is a VML consultant on environmental and energy matters.*

Virginia airports to receive \$400 million

By L. Preston Bryant, Jr.



THE INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT and Jobs Act appropriates \$399.7 million to 47 Virginia airports over the next five years.

The funds can be used to improve terminals, runways, gates, and concessions.

Washington Dulles International and Ronald Reagan Washington National airports will receive \$120.4 million and \$116.7 million, respectively, or about 60 percent of the total Virginia airport appropriation.

Richmond International will receive \$35.6 million and Norfolk International will get \$33 million.

Charlottesville-Albemarle is slated to receive \$15.4 million and Roanoke-Blacksburg \$14.9 million. Newport News/Williamsburg will get \$10.2 million. Lynchburg Regional will receive \$6.5 million.

A dozen airports will receive \$1.48 million each, including Danville Regional, Chesapeake Regional, and Winchester Regional.

There are 16 airports, including Front Royal-Warren County and Tappahannock-Essex County, that will receive \$790,000 each. Another eight airports, including Brookneal-Campbell, Farmville Regional, and Emporia-Greenville Regional will receive \$550,000 each.



Get to know the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program

WITH THE RECENT INCREASE in the frequency and severity of cyberattacks, state and local governments have reason to welcome the launch of a new program established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) – the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program, which will provide funding to enhance IT infrastructure security and threat response. Through this program, Virginia is expected to receive about \$21 million over a five-year period starting in 2022 (i.e., FY22-26). To receive the funds, Virginia will submit a Cybersecurity Plan to the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) of the Department of Homeland Security. CISA must ultimately approve the plan before the funds can be disbursed.

The program is targeted to assist localities; at least 80 percent of the funds allocated to states must be directed to local governments, and at least 25 percent must go to rural areas. As a condition of the grants, state and local governments must provide matching funds from their own coffers, with the federal share capped each fiscal year. For FY22, the federal share of the cost of an activity carried out under the grant program cannot exceed 90 percent, and this amount goes down 10 percent every year.

The IIJA requires the Commonwealth to consult with local governments while building the plan. Together, stakeholders must create a plan that describes how the Commonwealth and localities will accomplish a variety of actions related to the information systems, applications, and user accounts owned or operated by the Commonwealth or by local governments. Specifically, the plan must describe how the Commonwealth and localities will accomplish the following:

1. Manage, monitor, and track information systems, applications, and user accounts;
2. Monitor and audit network activity;
3. Enhance the preparation, response, and resiliency of information systems, applications, and user accounts against cybersecurity threats;
4. Implement a process of continuous cybersecurity vulnerability assessments and threat mitigation;
5. Ensure that the Commonwealth or local governments adopt and use best practices and methodologies to enhance cybersecurity;
6. Promote the delivery of safe, recognizable, and trustworthy online services by the Commonwealth or local governments;
7. Ensure continuity of operations, communications, and data networks of the Commonwealth or local governments in the event of a cybersecurity incident;
8. Identify and mitigate any gaps in the Commonwealth's cybersecurity workforces and bolster the knowledge, skills, and abilities of personnel to address cybersecurity risks;

9. Assess and mitigate cybersecurity risks relating to critical infrastructure and key resources;
10. Enhance capabilities to share cyber threat indicators between the Commonwealth and local governments;
11. Implement an IT modernization cybersecurity review process;
12. Develop and coordinate strategies to address cybersecurity risks;
13. Ensure adequate access to, and participation in, the services and programs by rural areas; and
14. Distribute funds, items, services, capabilities, or activities to local governments.

The plan must also describe the individual responsibilities of the Commonwealth and the local governments in carrying out the actions above, and it must outline a timeline for implementation.

There are many questions that remain about the program, such as: What are the rules for funding? What factors will be used by the Commonwealth to determine the amount of funding allocated to localities? How will the Commonwealth incorporate locality cybersecurity priorities into its plan? What will happen if the locality cannot pay for the matching funds required?

It is likely that these questions will be addressed in CISA's guidance on the grant program, though it is unclear when this guidance will be released.

In the meantime, this is a moment to celebrate for those who have long advocated for dedicated federal cybersecurity funding to increase the security of state and local governments' IT infrastructure.

About the author: *Margaret Rockwell is a counsel with McGuireWoods Consulting where she is an assistant vice president in the Infrastructure and Economic Development group.*





Making the most of the IIJA: Some guidelines for Virginia's localities from the National League of Cities



LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE been calling on Congress to get to work on an infrastructure package since 2016, and on November 15, 2021, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was signed into law by President Joe Biden surrounded by city leaders and members of Congress. Also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), this \$1.2 trillion bill was the result of years of local government, business and industry leaders calling for action. This effort was supported by the National League of Cities (NLC) and state organizations like the Virginia Municipal League. It means transformative investments in transportation, broadband and water are heading to Virginia. These funds can be used to create safer transportation, ensure equitable infrastructure among neighborhoods, build resilient structures, and strengthen our economy.

Virginia's local leaders should begin to plan and prepare now to make the most of these new opportunities coming from the IIJA. Municipal officials should consider the following to maximize program opportunities:

- 1. Consider existing programs as well as the new programs:** IIJA includes \$550 billion in new programs many of which allow communities and their partners to take advantage of the federal resources. However, IIJA also renews many existing programs with proven value to Virginia's

localities. In the discussion of what's new, don't miss those existing programs which could be just as helpful to your community.

- 2. Think about working at both the State and Federal Levels:** Localities can access funds from a significant number of programs directly from the federal government, but most will not come to Virginia's communities without completing applications – either at the state or federal level. Get ready to compete for all the funds that will be available by identifying the entities and people within your organization best able to complete the state and federal applications.
- 3. Prepare to support the project and tell your story:** Most federal grants come with some expectation of a local match. For example, the local match for transportation grants is typically around 20 percent. But some programs require less from the locality. This is especially true for smaller and disadvantaged communities. Take care to understand what your contribution may be and consider how to organize the local funding. Finally, consider how the projects will contribute to local quality of life and economic growth and get ready to tell your community's infrastructure story!

Program overview

Surface Transportation



Congress is investing \$110 billion in transportation in the five-year IIJA on top of the past levels of federal transportation programs. America’s localities maintain a significant portion of our nation’s expansive transportation network, and the IIJA provides communities more opportunities than ever to apply directly for federal funds and work with their regional and state partners to create new mobility options. In addition to renewing existing programs, USDOT will have more than \$124 billion in competitive funding to distribute to applicants for roads, bridges, trails, rail, transit, and more! Now is the time to consider how existing federal transportation programs and the new IIJA programs match up to support your community’s needs. In fact, many of the new and expanded programs relate directly to the items that many localities identify as their most pressing needs. Examples include:

- An extensive new bridge program will allow states to pass through up to 100 percent federal funding for poorly maintained, locally owned bridges off the highway system.
- The new “Safe Streets and Roads for All” program will support \$5 billion in local projects to reduce traffic fatalities, which sadly are getting worse with 20,000 lives lost in just the first half of 2021.
- New competitive grants totaling \$2.5 billion are available to strategically deploy publicly accessible charging and fueling infrastructure. Transit’s Capital Investment Grant program jumps up with \$3 billion authorized per year.
- A new \$1.75 billion “All Stations Accessibility Program” and \$250 million under the “Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities” program will help more seniors stay in their homes for longer.
- The “Reconnecting Communities” program has \$1 billion available to provide seed capital for initiatives to remove barriers to community connectivity and rectify harms caused by past highway investments.
- Rail sees a \$66 billion investment with \$12 billion dedicated to partnership grants for intercity rail service.
- A new \$3 billion “Grade Crossing Elimination” grant program will help to fix rail and road crossing congestion and safety issues in communities.

Learn more about these and other transportation opportunities at www.transportation.gov/bipartisan-infrastructure-law.

Water Infrastructure

The IIJA provides financing and funding for wastewater and drinking water projects through four main buckets under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. In total, Virginia will receive \$126,383,000 in FY22 for water infrastructure, representing the allocation for the first year of funding. The funding is broken down as follows:

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund (traditional) – \$36,724,000
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (traditional) – \$29,295,000
- Lead pipe replacement through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund – \$46,134,000
- Emerging Contaminants through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund – \$12,302,000
- Emerging Contaminants through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund – \$1,928,000

With all these funds flowing through the state revolving funds, local governments will be required to submit applications to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (clean water) and Virginia Department of Health (drinking water). It is important to note that for the traditional State Revolving Funds and the lead pipe replacement funds, the states are required to award the money as 49 percent principal forgiveness/grants and 51 percent loans. For the funding allocations that address emerging contaminants, the states are required to award the funds as 100 percent principal forgiveness/grants.

NLC has created two helpful fact sheets on the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds that provide an overview of the eligible uses and give examples of how communities have used these programs in the past.

- **Clean Water Fact Sheet** – explains how the program can be used for climate resilience projects, like green infrastructure and managing stormwater. www.nlc.org/resource/arpa-clean-water-infrastructure.
- **Drinking Water Fact Sheet** – explores uses pertaining to lead pipe replacement and protecting source water from other contaminants, such as PFAS. We know these are all critical issues for Virginia communities. www.nlc.org/resource/arpa-drinking-water-infrastructure.

While the fact sheets were developed specifically as a guide for communities around ARPA, they serve as a general overview of eligible project categories as local leaders are thinking about whether to apply for an opportunity under the IIJA.





Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant

The IJA provides funding for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation

Block Grant (EECBG) for the first time in over a decade. These flexible funds will help communities invest in energy-efficient retrofits, update building codes, adopt renewable energy technologies, provide incentives for residents to use transportation alternatives, implement energy-saving campaigns, and more!

Examples of what can be accomplished with these funds include the City of Roanoke which received EECBG funding in 2009 and undertook lighting upgrades and other projects, including a city-wide replacement of incandescent traffic signals with LEDs that provided energy savings and reduced labor costs. Another example, the City of Alexandria used a portion of its EECBG funds for a green fleet purchase program, a project to install solar technology on a municipal building, a green building program outreach initiative, and other projects.

Regional collaboration and projects are also encouraged with the EECBG. For example, the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission received funding in 2009 to perform energy audits on 50 public buildings in the region, prepare an Energy Conservation Study for each, and subsequently make improvements that increased energy efficiency and energy conservation. Overall, the project provided each locality with a foundation for a local energy plan and jump-started the implementation of energy projects throughout the region.

Initiatives like these save cities and taxpayers dollars in energy costs. This new round of funding creates an opportunity to start new initiatives or build upon past efforts.

Learn more at www.nlc.org/article/2021/12/03/what-you-need-to-know-the-energy-efficiency-and-conservation-block-grant.

Broadband Infrastructure



The IJA provides a historic federal investment in closing the digital divide – roughly \$65 billion for broadband infrastructure and digital equity. Most of this funding is funneled through a series of grant programs managed by the National Telecommunica-

tions and Information Administration (NTIA). The largest of these programs is the \$42 billion Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program which will provide formula grants to state governments to award subgrants for broadband planning, mapping, deployment, and adoption programs. States are required to prioritize unserved areas, underserved areas, and some key anchor institutions and facilities. States are also required by the law to develop broadband plans for approval by NTIA prior to spending the funds and must coordinate with local governments and other stakeholders when developing these plans.

NTIA is also responsible for the Digital Equity Act grant programs in which some funding is reserved for state formula grants, and the remainder for competitive grants. Local governments and nonprofits can access these funds directly for digital inclusion work, such as connecting applicable residents to devices, subsidized broadband subscriptions, and skills training. NTIA will also administer the

Middle Mile Broadband Infrastructure grant program, which will provide competitive grants to entities (including local governments) building middle mile broadband infrastructure projects, which do not connect directly to end users.

Because most of the funding will flow through state governments, it is critical for local leaders to engage early and often with both the NTIA policymaking process and state broadband leadership. The guidance that NTIA places around the grant programs will determine the specifics of how state governments must engage with their localities, how much discretion they have in selecting subgrantees and project areas, and other details very important to local leaders. In addition, by building a positive relationship with the state broadband office and proactively communicating community needs now, communities can get a jump start on the flurry of jockeying for funds that will occur in state capitals in the coming years.

Other important funds for broadband and digital equity in the IJA include extensions or expansions of existing programs. The law includes \$14 billion for the Federal Communications Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program, which succeeds the temporary Emergency Broadband Benefit and provides a monthly subsidy to qualifying low-income households on home broadband service. It also provides \$2 billion in additional funding for the existing ReConnect rural broadband infrastructure grant and loan program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Get ready to rebuild!

As we celebrate this huge legislative win, NLC also wants to make sure localities are beginning to plan and prepare to make the most of these opportunities from the IJA in 2022. Here are just a few resources we've put together to start getting your city ready to rebuild:

- 1. Identify your local priorities and how they match up to federal grants** using NLC's new Infrastructure Bill Insights Tool for members. This tool provides a searchable list of programs for local leaders included in the IJA. NLC will continue to add to this live resource with application links and deadlines as they become available. Access the tool at www.bit.ly/3IRlmKq.
- 2. Plan to attend NLC's ongoing "Ready to Rebuild" training sessions** on new and renewed infrastructure programs that localities can access. NLC will have federal officials and cities that were successful in these programs sharing their insights so you can better understand the federal infrastructure programs and get advice. For news about upcoming information sessions, please sign up for the *Federal Advocacy Update Newsletter* at www.nlc.org/newsletters.
- 3. Save the date for the 2022 Congressional City Conference, March 14-16**, in Washington, D.C., where we'll sit down with key administration leaders who will be administering the programs. We'll talk about what's coming and start to advance your priorities with the administration and Congress. For more information, go to www.ccc.nlc.org.

We know all of Virginia's municipalities are ready to rebuild, and NLC is excited to deliver for you to make the most of this historic opportunity in 2022. Thanks to the IJA, local governments can do more than survive; we can thrive!

About the NLC authors: *Brittney Kohler is the legislative director, transportation and infrastructure services; Carolyn Berndt is the legislative director, sustainability; Angelina Panettieri is the legislative director, information technology & communications.*



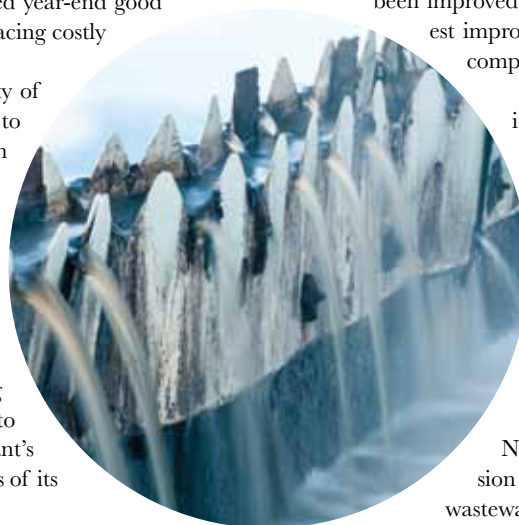
Fredericksburg slated to receive ARPA funds for wastewater project

Quantico, Exmore, and Wachapreague also to get special funds

WHEN GOV. RALPH NORTHAM released his last proposed budget in mid-December, it revealed year-end good news for several Virginia localities facing costly water and wastewater treatment plant projects.

Among the proposed beneficiaries, the City of Fredericksburg is slated to receive \$27 million to support a significant overhaul of and expansion to its wastewater treatment facility. The proposed funding is designated to come from the state's untapped American Rescue Plan Act funds.

City officials have worked with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for more than two years to explore options to improve their treatment plant, including whether to join a regional facility. In addition to improving and expanding the wastewater plant's capacity, the city will have to remediate portions of its conveyance system.



The Fredericksburg treatment plant was built in 1955 and has been improved only a few times over the years. The latest improvement and expansion project should be completed by 2026.

The governor's proposed budget also includes ARPA funds for improvement to three towns' water or sewer systems. Quantico is to receive \$17 million for water and sewer projects, notably to improve infrastructure connecting to Marine Corps Base Quantico. Exmore and Wachapreague, both on the Eastern Shore, are to receive \$5 million and \$3.6 million, respectively, for sewer projects.

The General Assembly will consider Northam's proposed budget in the 2022 session and must approve these local water and wastewater projects.

AlexRenew, Lynchburg, Richmond receive ARPA funds for combined sewer overflow projects

ONE OF THE MOST NOTEWORTHY American Rescue Plan Act success stories is the \$125 million in ARPA funds directed to Alexandria, Lynchburg, and Richmond to assist in their decades-long efforts to remediate their combined sewer overflow (CSO) systems.

Each of the cities' combined sewer and stormwater systems date the mid-1800s. In periods of heavy rain, wastewater volumes overwhelm the system and result in raw sewage discharges through outfalls to local rivers. While this may have been acceptable in the 19th century, in today's world this violates the federal Clean Water Act. As such, each of these cities have been mandated to dramatically reduce overflow incidents.

The three cities face a combined \$2 billion in mandated sewage infrastructure work, with each having deadlines to complete it. The ARPA funds come at just the right time, helping to accelerate the cities' projects and reduce local ratepayer burdens.

Alexandria's CSO project will cost \$615 million, and it must be completed by July 2025. The city transferred the CSO infrastructure to Alexandria Renew Enterprises (AlexRenew), the local sanitation authority, in 2018. AlexRenew is charged with financing, designing, and constructing the new sewage collection and treatment system. Its major features include a two-mile long holding and conveyance tunnel and significant upgrades to the treatment plant.

Lynchburg has been working on its CSO system since then mid-1970s when they first began mapping it. Design and construction work has been underway since the 1990s. The city has closed 115 of more than 130 outfalls, though the most complex ones remain in place. Lynchburg has spent more than \$300 million, with about \$50 million remaining.

The project must be completed by 2036.

Richmond has the largest and most expensive CSO remediation project. Work began in the 1980s. The city has spent more than \$300 million and has an additional \$900 million to go. Work done to date has enabled the city to capture more than 90 percent of its overflow. However, the most expensive work remains to be done. Richmond has a 2035 deadline to complete all CSO work.

These cities have had long-standing partnerships with the state, which over the years has provided financial assistance for these big, expensive, federally mandated projects. The cities and state recognized that ARPA funding provides an opportunity to infuse significant cash into the projects, advancing the work and reducing ratepayer burdens.

Alexandria and Richmond each received \$50 million in ARPA funds. Lynchburg received \$25 million. Each city must provide matching funds.

Lynchburg estimates that the ARPA funding will shave a decade off its remaining work. After more than 30 years of working on the project, they believe they can now finish their CSO remediation in about five years.

Localities often find that unexpected one-time federal funds are best applied to big, costly infrastructure projects, which otherwise place inordinate burdens on local ratepayers or are deferred for years on end. Federal ARPA funds are helping many Virginia localities address major public works projects. Alexandria, Lynchburg, and Richmond are primary examples.



Making good use of ARPA funds: Kilmarnock, Falls Church, Scottsville

ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH, localities have found creative ways to use the money allocated through the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Here are snapshots of three Virginia localities that gives idea of the range of permitted expenditures under ARPA.

Town of Kilmarnock: Establishing a small business façade refreshment grant program

Using ARPA SLFRF funds, the Town of Kilmarnock established the Kilmarnock Façade Refreshment Program. This program provided grants to town business owners for façade and landscaping improvements. The goal of the program was to improve the town’s built environment for continued economic development and to build on previous investments through restoration and preservation of commercial buildings.



Priority for grant funds were given to projects that included the creation of non-disposable, tangible assets. Upgrades to properties included façade improvements like new paint and awnings, signage, and landscaping improvements. Projects that would be considered routine maintenance, such as window washing, were not eligible. The Kilmarnock Town Council approved \$78,000 in grant reimbursements and the program resulted in upwards of \$200,000 in private investment. Overall, 37 grant applicants were approved, with others still possible.

City of Falls Church: Ensuring available affordable housing

The City of Falls Church and the Falls Church Economic Development Authority (EDA) are focused on creating committed affordable housing. To preserve existing 1940s market affordable housing, in a hot real estate market, they recently purchased five of the twenty Virginia Village multi-unit rental properties that provide market-rate affordable housing to residents. Using ARPA SLFRF funds under the affordable housing development use, the city will implement an acquisition strike cash fund to proactively purchase properties. Furthermore, the city plans to support current property residents by restoring the City’s Reserve Fund and EDA Land Bank Fund. This will help the

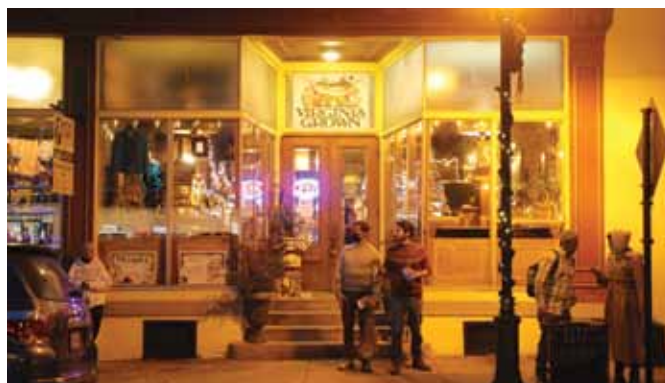


city retain lower rents, prevent displacement of current tenants, and ensure that the monthly income-to-expense cash flow is sustainable. The city has also won a \$3.75 million Amazon REACH VA Housing Grant that will be combined with ARPA funds to leverage its ability to preserve these affordable housing units.

In addition to the city’s near-term affordable housing preservation strategy, Falls Church seeks to implement a long-term redevelopment plan for Virginia Village. Specifically, the city plans to establish a revolving fund to acquire and consolidate additional mixed-use development on properties adjacent to the current city-owned parcels. Eventually this fund could be used to construct even more affordable housing in the community.

Town of Scottsville: Enhancing historic downtown to renew tourism

Scottsville has successfully leveraged its ARPA SLRF funds for stronger results in several key areas. Perhaps the most visible are the town’s enhanced streetscapes and landscaping in its historic downtown. Seasonal banners announce special events in the town. Extra tree care and flowers spruce up the town’s main streets, with priority given to native plants befitting the town’s “Bee City” status (Scottsville was Virginia’s first official Bee City USA affiliate and strives to sustain native pollinator populations by providing a healthy habitat). As the Town of Scottsville relies heavily on tourism to its historic downtown, these enhancements will make the downtown area more appealing to visitors and benefit residents as well.



Scottsville is also planning additional outdoor recreation upgrades to meet both economic and social goals. The town used ARPA funds to support a planning process that will enhance boat ramps and access to the James River. Virginia’s Department of Conservation and Recreation was an active partner in the process, and there is potential to match ARPA funds with other state support.

What’s your ARPA success story?

These are but a few ARPA success stories. All towns, cities, and counties are using ARPA funds to improve infrastructure, support residents and business, and boost local economies. If you have a great story you’d like to share, please send details to *VTC* Editor Rob Bullington, rbullington@vml.org. We’d love to help you get the word out!

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By **Adrianna Dimperio and Rebecca Naurath**

Draper Aden Associates releases 33rd Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report (2021)

UNDERSTANDING WATER AND WASTEWATER rate trends is crucial for public utilities and municipalities, including cities and towns, across Virginia. The Commonwealth boasts more than 250 public providers of water and wastewater services that are active in every size and type of community. This variety can make it difficult for providers to effectively analyze statewide trends and set benchmarks when considering their rates. Are your water and wastewater rates in line with similar communities? Perhaps those rates are lower than average, meaning that your community could be losing revenue. Similarly, when municipalities and water and wastewater providers consider rate changes it's vital that they provide context for proposed rates.

That's why Draper Aden Associates has produced the *Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report* for more than three decades. These reports are essential resources for public utilities and are eagerly anticipated. The 2021 edition of the report was released in November.

Like previous years, the firm collaborated with the Virginia Municipal League to conduct the water and wastewater rate survey.

Significant findings for 2021

The two most significant findings from the 2021 survey are related to rate changes. First, the average water rate across the Commonwealth increased by 3.3 percent in 2021 and the average sewer rate increased by 4.3 percent. The water rate increase was slightly

lower than previous years and the wastewater rate was slightly higher. Since 2011, water rates have increased by approximately 3.5 percent per year and wastewater rates have increased by approximately 3.9 percent per year. These increases occurred across a control group of representative utilities that allows the report to extrapolate trends across the state.

Second, 48 percent of respondents reported a water rate increase in 2021 while 47 percent of respondents increased sewer rates in 2021. Thus, approximately half of all providers raised rates.

ARPA offers opportunities

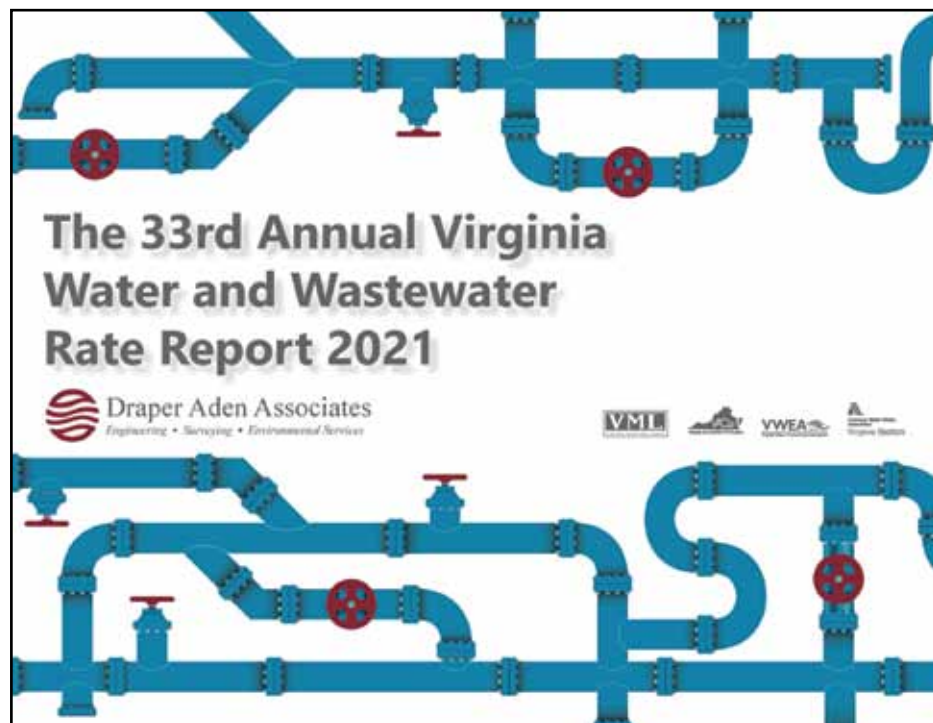
The most significant opportunity on the horizon for public utilities is funding related to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). These funds offer potential transformational resources for public utilities. For example, this money would allow public utilities to invest in water and wastewater infrastructure projects. Additionally, these funds could offset the need for higher rates and capital recovery charges in 2022. Creating a strategy to leverage these funds will be critical for public utilities.

Resources

The *33rd Annual Virginia Water and Wastewater Rate Report* was produced by Draper Aden Associates in collaboration with leading trade associations that support municipalities and utilities, including the Virginia Municipal League. The 2021 Virginia Water and Wastewater Report and previous reports are available for download on the Draper Aden website: www.daa.com and VML's website at www.vml.org/publications/other-publications.

"ARPA Q&A for utilities" provides helpful information on using ARPA funds for water and wastewater projects. Available at www.daa.com and www.vml.org/publications/other-publications.

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TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG

By Christina Edney

Innovative multipurpose park to combine outdoor recreation with community needs

THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG has begun construction of a new, multipurpose, 63-acre park that will feature many amenities for residents, including the region's first all-inclusive playground for children and adults of all abilities.

The all-inclusive playground will be constructed based on seven principles of inclusive playground design – be fair, be included, be smart, be independent, be safe, be active and be comfortable. This space will afford exciting recreation opportunities and sensory-rich activities for children and adults with all abilities and backgrounds and is anticipated to serve the needs of families within a 200-mile radius of the park.

The multimillion-dollar facility will also be home to four Olympic-sized artificial turf fields, a splash pad, a stately pavilion overlooking the park, two dog parks and nearly two-miles of paved trail – amongst other amenities.

The four turf fields will be available for a variety of scheduled and unscheduled sporting events including soccer, lacrosse, football, rugby, and more. Tournaments from local and regional recreation leagues will be hosted at the new park, providing a modern venue for play.

The two dog park areas, one for large dogs and one for smaller breed dogs, will be artificially surfaced with antimicrobial turf to ensure a clean and healthy environment. For those wanting to enjoy the rest of the park with their furry friends, there will be plenty of open green spaces, paved trails, picnic tables and benches to relax and enjoy the sunrises and sunsets over the surrounding mountains.

A project nearly 10 years in the making

In 2013, 63 acres of land became available for sale, and the Town of Christiansburg recognized a unique opportunity to offer recreational amenities to residents throughout the town, while also providing easy access to Interstate 81 for visitors. Christiansburg's town council discussed the purchase of the property and after numerous meetings, unanimously approved purchase of the land.

In 2016, the town unveiled a conceptual master plan for the park, and in 2018 received an unsolicited Public-Private Education and Infrastructure Act (PPEA) design and construction proposal to build the park. Additional proposals followed with the town ultimately selecting Falconer Construction Company in 2019. The process included extensive input from the community with various public hearings and meetings.

The town council approved design plans in 2020 and construction began in 2021 with completion anticipated in 2022.

The park will be paid for with a combination of monies from the town's general fund, town reserves, private contributions, sponsorships, revenue from the sale of commercial out-parcels on the park property, grants, and bonds.



“The new Park will increase interactive play and encourage inclusion. There will be opportunities for active and passive recreation for all ages.”

- Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Director Brad Epperley

The right place at the right time

With panoramic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains and situated between two universities in proximity to the retail hub of the New River Valley, park organizers expect to attract thousands of patrons each year. The park will help both increase programming and give the option for recreation without structured activities.

Studies show the Town of Christiansburg is expected to see a population increase to approximately 28,000 by the year 2030. In market research, the town observed a growing need for passive, active and inclusive recreation opportunities. The innovative design of the new park will meet the needs of its growing population with state-of-the-art facilities for residents and visitors.

Town leaders anticipate additional revenue through sports tourism, increased property values through quality-of-life improvements and the ability to better serve its diverse population through this regional park. Moreover, town leaders say this approach will attract



athletes from across the country. In fact, the Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Department has already begun working with various teams, non-profits, and organizations to bring additional sporting opportunities to the new facility.

“These are exciting times for the Town of Christiansburg. The park will bring citizens closer together, visitors to our town and provide a state-of-the-art recreation experience to all,” observes Christiansburg Town Manager Randy Wingfield.

So...what’s the name of the new park?

If you are curious about the name of the new park, you are not alone! The Christiansburg Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission plans to release details on the much anticipated naming of the park soon.

About the author: *Christina Edney is the public relations director for the Town of Christiansburg.*

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For more information contact Rob Bullington at rbullington@vml.org or visit: www.vml.org/corporate-engagement/community-business-membership.



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