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2011 Achievement Awards

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Virginia Association of Counties
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Call for Entries



2011 VACo Achievement Awards

Deadline: June 1, 2011

Application Form

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. Deadline: June 1, 2011.

Program Information

Locality County of Louisa, VA
Program Title Louisa County Transportation Plan
Program Category Transportation
Population Category (3) 30,001 - 50,000 [33,153 2010 US Census]

Contact Information

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Signature of county administrator or chief administrative officer

Name Robert Dube'
Title County Administrator
Signature* *R. Dube'*

*Entries without this signature will not be accepted.

OVERVIEW OF THE LOUISA COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN:

In 2007, the Commonwealth of Virginia implemented a new requirement for every county to develop a transportation plan, though it leaves much of the plan's scope up to the locality. Louisa County's plan was designed and written to show a clear link between how land is used and how roads should be developed. The document is innovative in its approach to writing a transportation plan as well as the fact few rural localities in the Commonwealth have prepared such a detailed, accessible plan to date.

The transportation plan was prepared over nearly two years through a collaboration between Louisa County and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC). The plan was adopted in March 2011 as part of the county's Comprehensive Plan. It sets a vision and outlines implementation strategies for creating a multimodal transportation network that helps achieve the county's goals for managed growth.

The plan is a model for other localities, especially rapidly growing rural communities that need to be more proactive with their transportation planning strategies.

What is the Louisa County Transportation Plan?

In 2007, the Commonwealth of Virginia implemented a new requirement for every county to develop a transportation plan, though it leaves much of the plan's scope up to the locality. Louisa County's Plan was designed and written to show a clear link between how land is used and how roads should be developed.

The plan utilizes extensive graphics, including photographs and charts that show different land uses and adjacent roadways, in a manner that citizens not versed in transportation and planning vernacular can easily understand. In its recommendations chapter, the plan puts the land use/transportation link into practice, identifying specific projects for growth areas as well as some rural areas of the county that will help manage growth. The document is innovative in its approach to writing a transportation plan as well as the fact few rural localities in the Commonwealth have prepared such a detailed, accessible plan to date.

What is the problem, challenge, or situation faced by the locality?

Louisa County is ranked thirteenth in the Commonwealth in percentage increase in population, at nearly 30% since 2000. The increase in population over the past ten years has placed a strain on the county's infrastructure and overloaded the county's limited primary routes of travel.

In Louisa County's Comprehensive Plan, written in 2001 and revised in 2006, the Board of Supervisors established designated growth areas and committed to developing water and wastewater infrastructure in those areas to serve a concentrated population.

Until 2011, when the Louisa County Transportation Plan was adopted, it had not yet been established how the county would manage another critical infrastructure element: roads.

How was the program carried out, including financing and staffing?

The Transportation Plan was prepared over nearly two years through a collaboration between Louisa County and the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC). Louisa County, through its collaboration with TJPDC, acquired a Transportation Housing Alliance grant for \$8,000. The county contributed \$8,000 to fund the project, with TJPDC contributing \$10,000. The county managed the project, helping to keep costs down, and keeping the plan attuned to local goals.

As part of the fact gathering process, six public meetings were held to gain input from citizens and business on transportation strategies. When the plan was in a complete draft form, the county organized two additional public meetings to give residents an additional opportunity for comment.

At the same time, a considerable amount of public input and outside expertise from other organizations, particularly VDOT and the regional transit agency JAUNT, was utilized throughout the process to ensure that the plan included the best planning strategies.

What results have come from the implementation of the Transportation Plan?

The plan was adopted in March 2011 as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan. It has had an impact on the work of private developers, who have made inquiries to

determine how new residential and commercial projects may be aligned with the county's stated transportation goals and objectives.

The plan is helping the Louisa County Board of Supervisors as it invests limited public funds in transportation projects. The Board can use the Plan as a guide as it sets aside funding annually in the Capital Improvement Plan for transportation.

In addition, the plan establishes a framework that gives guidance to developers and local leaders in future development design, therefore saving countless dollars by developing transportation infrastructure in the most efficient means possible from the start.